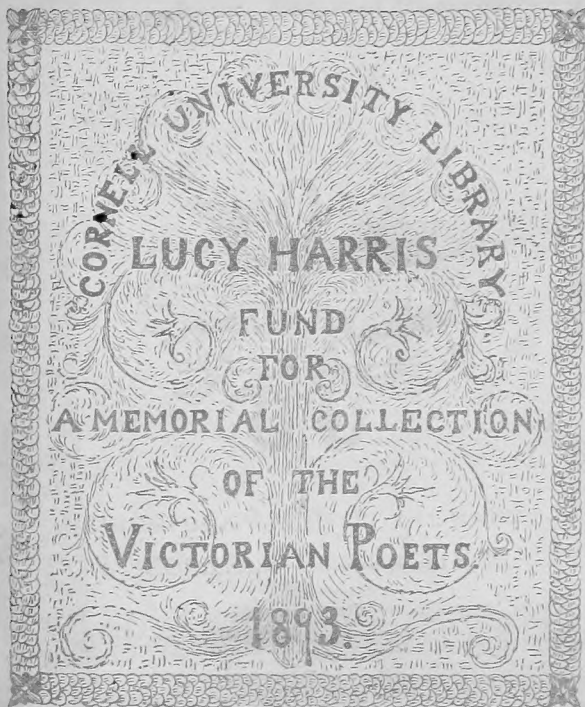




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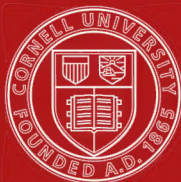


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THE
POETICAL WORKS

OF

Edward Vaughan Kenealy.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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A NEW PANTOMIME.

THE PROSCENIUM.

Chorus.

LADIES and Gentlemen, and you,
If any here there be,
Belonging to the intermediate crew,
(Your pardon, since you know I cannot see),
We do present you here to-day,
A certain thing—it can't be called a play;
A tragedy, a comedy, or farce,
A melodrama, interlude, or masque.
Our Author would as soon teach boys to parse,
Or bishops piety, or statesmen virtue,
Or bind himself to any other plan,
Impossible to man;
As set himself to work at such a task.
We've something better, Critics, to divert you;
A Pantomime!—what say you?—ah, you stare,
Wise children of large growth;
Than your forefathers fifty times more clever;
The ladies flirt their fans—the he-things swear—
Don't be alarmed—I'll not repeat each oath.
This is a Pantomime, and rightly named,
Because it is an Image of the All
In Earth, in Heaven, in Hell, and in the Air;
Wherever Life, or Soul, or Spirit dwell,
Or the Enchantress Nature weaves her spell;

Or Thought or Being be,
In Space or Star, or God's immensity;
Our Author, dipping his gold pen in gall,
And milk of Paradise, conceived the work;
And here it is, brought forth for you, and you,
Masculine, feminine, and neuter too.

Our *Dramatis Personæ* are most numerous;
'Twould take me twenty days to count,
And yet not name their full amount—
Shapes, Spirits, Shadows, Angels, Fates,
Nymphs, Naiads, Imps from Satan's gates,
Satan himself, Abaddon, Man,
Ghosts, Goblins, Ghouls, and sovran Pan;
Fays, Destinies, Sprites, Wisps, and Frogs,
And the snake-headed King of Dogs;
Smart Hermes, Mephistopheles, and Charon;
A very celebrated German Baron—
Fierce Fiends,—but all our people, grave and humorous,
Will strut before you when the time arrives;
Till when—look after other people's wives.

We've got besides unparalleled machinery—
The air-born Rainbow, the dark heaving Ocean;
Laughterless Hades, Styx, the Sun and Moon;
The Star that every morning takes a lotion
Of the still deep—so sings that coarse Buffoon,
Who never washed his face, or changed his shirt,
Or shaved his chin, but loved perpetual dirt;
My master Virgil, in the maudlin tale
Of him who showed his wife leg bail,
And left her in the Trojan embers,

As every well-whipped brat remembers ;—
 We've Clouds and Comets, Planets, Vapours,
 That cut the most amazing capers :
 Rivers and Skies, and mighty Lakes,
 That teem with Hydras, Serpents, Snakes ;
 Aye, and with Hippopotami,
 Big as the London Monument—no lie .
 Since The Beginning, never artist had
 A better stock of grand old scenery,
 Than here to-day is shown unto the Mad,
 By their most venerable Dad .
 See you the soul of what I say ?—
 The spirit that gives life unto this clay ?—
 Of course you do—'tis clear as day .

The moral of this Epic Pantomime,
 (For that 'tis Epic you shall see in time ;
 As truly as the Tales of Troy,
 Or Odysseus, his father's hopeful Boy,
 Or Dux Trojanus, Dante, Hudibras,
 Milton, and Lucan are)—is, Man's an Ass ;
 A very pretty Pantomimic moral,
 About whose truth the world and I won't quarrel .
 I do not value three skips of a —— mouse,
 Whether in this the Author shows his *NOUË*,
 Or nonsense ; judging of the mighty mass
 By his own noble self ; who, if his rule
 Be once admitted, it requires no fool
 To tell you how *he* must henceforward class .
 In fact, *I* rather think he is a noodle,
 With no more sense than old lord Doodle,
 And so I told him when he wrote this fudge ;

But he, who looked as wise as any judge,
 Assured me I was but a wretched poodle.
 Perhaps I am—and looking at *you* here,
 And pondering on the millions far and near,
 I think it very strange indeed,
 Why the Almighty Seer
 Produced the donkey breed :
 Fate sometimes works results extremely queer,
 And this is one—or I am much mistaken,
 To puzzle the bronze head of Friar Bacon.—
 Go home, you stupid animals, to grass!

Yet—if Man be an Ass, I see no reason,
 Why he should therefore fret himself to death ;
 Accusing Fate, as some do, of high treason,
 For granting them, their spark of vital breath .
 Asses are honest animals enough ;
 And, 'pon *my* conscience, if *I* were a donkey,
 I would not change my state with one of you,
 Illustrious nobles, ladies, lords, and dandies .
 For Men impose sad evils on their backs,
 By their own waywardness and headstrong vices ;
 But asses suffer only those which Nature
 Lays on their shoulders . Some of us grow sad,
 If a brat sneezes inauspiciously ;
 And some grow sorrowful if men reproach them ;
 And some are frightened by unlucky dreams ;
 And some by a hooting owl i' the ivy bush ;
 And some because they're wived, and some because
 They are *not* wived, and some—because they're both .
 Contention, Care, Rage, Avarice, Lust, Law,
 Lying, Deceit, Ambition, with their poisons,

Wait upon noble sky-aspiring Man :
 Who would not be an Ass, rather than have
 Soul-racking playfellows like these I've named ?
 And faith I'd rather be long-ears himself,
 Than such a slippered Pantaloon as this.

Pantaloon.

Good people all, of every rank and age,
 Assemble round and lend attentive ears,
 Until you hear the Wisdom of the Sage,
 Hight Pantaloon, whose fame fills heaven's spheres ;
 There be who bravely vaunt the ancient page
 Of Solomon, and meet with angry fliers,
 All other wisdom, underneath the moon—
 I wish they'd prize more highly—Pantaloon.

Who well begins, his work is half complete ;
 The Pyramids of single bricks are made ;
 An idle butcher must not hope for meat ;
 Poverty teaches every kind of trade :
 As stolen waters there are none so sweet ;
 The brightest gem will lie unprized in shade ;
 A fool will burn his house to roast an egg ;
 Who sleeps in summer must in winter beg .

Experience is a teacher in whose school
 Even fools may learn—

Clown .

Then seek her school at once :

Kicks him off.

I never heard such trash in all my life :—
 You fellows in the orchestra play up .

Sings.

Keep in mind, keep in mind,
 What you shall hear, nor let it pass like wind ;—
 For Wisdom does not teach or charm the less,
 Because arrayed in Mirth's attractive dress .

Keep in mind, keep in mind ;
 Lightest words have often souls within ;
 Pearls which, if you dive for, you shall find .
 Smallest hairs throw shadows ; spiders spin
 Threads that link the stars with earth :—
 Gravity is shrined in mirth .

When you look upon The Snake,
 Mark him well ;
 Once in God's bright bowers he spake
 Things that none may tell ;
 Only those who dwell
 In the Shadow of the Light
 Which illumes the Universe .
 The Great Beast you then shall see,
 Whom the wily Snake hath fettered
 In his shining coil .
 Who is he ? who is he ?
 Shouts each fool unlettered, lettered ;
 Read and think, and think and read ;
 When the time ordained you toil,
 Haply you shall know ;
 When you find it, let the seed
 In your spirit grow,

Till from Pole to Pole it spread,
 Like that Eternal Tablet of white pearl,
 Whereon God writes those wonderful decrees,
 Which speak of all, past, present, and to come,
 As sung of old in Islam's heavenly hymns.

Harlequin.

Spring up, bright flowers of harmony, spring up,
 The nectar food of gods bestowed on man ;
 And wake the lyre of many tones ;
 And from the golden-hearted lute,
 And the lily-breathing flute,
 Sprinkle round their silvery treasure,
 Moving all to love and pleasure ;
 Spreading liquid sweetness,
 Through the sapphire air,
 Picturing to the fancy,
 Visions strange and fair .
 Lo ! Sir Harlequin is near,
 With his mighty magic wand .

Clown.

What can bring this fellow here ?
 He were better in a pond .

Harlequin.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I merely come
 To tell you, and all classical communities,
 That in this Pantomime of ours, we scorn
 All critics, past and future, and the ——— Unities .

We waft you as we please from Earth to Heaven,
 Thence down to Hell, and upward to the Moon,
 Ten million, billion, trillion miles or so,
 Through space unbounded in our Bard's balloon,
 Which travels lightning-like through the Abyss
 Of Æther, taking several years to do it;—
 We do not care a farthing if you hiss;—
 Whate'er our doom, we'll willingly go through it.
 Convinced in spite of fate that *you* are wrong,
 And that *we* knowing ones alone are right;
 Don't wonder therefore when I wave my wand,
 Nor let the changes move grim Aristarchian spite.

Clown.

And now my beauteous little birdies,
 I hope we've given you lime enough,
 To catch within our wily net-work,
 Rook, magpie, wagtail, wren, and chough.
 Our anxious Manager is sweating,
 With terror for his bantling's fate;
 Our high-flown Bard is sipping claret;
 And I'm detaining you with prate.
 Enough,—'tis time the Prologue cease,
 I see you're anxious for the piece.
 Ho!—prompters, callboys, fiddlers, and scene-shifters,
 Prepare within there! Ring the bell. Behold!
 The curtain rises—now, by Mother Bunch!
 Scenes of such splendour saw I ne'er before.



ACT I. SCENE I.

THE TWO SPIRITS.

Moonlight and Starshine . The Earth whirling in the distance .

Time, Dec. 31, 1831.

A Throne of Stars, on which the SPIRIT OF THE OLD YEAR is sitting . The SPIRIT rises, as the SPIRIT OF THE NEW YEAR enters on a Rainbow .

The Spirit of the New Year.

HAIL to thee, bright and beautiful Earth!—

I have come from my home where the Lightnings dwell,
Where the Thunders laugh in their giant mirth,

To watch thee, and tend thee, and guard thee well .

From my Cloud-Pavilion in space afar,

I have seen thee—a bright and a golden Star,

Glittering still in the clear soft sky :

And, oh! with what joy to thy blissful bowers,

Where sunshine blends with fruits and flowers,

On the wings of the morning light I fly ;

O Sister Spirit! thy throne resign,

For this beautiful earth is mine—all mine.

The Spirit of the Old Year.

Spirit of Beauty! and art thou come

To this world of sin from thine angel home,

To see the sights that must strike thee dumb ?

For know it is ruled by a ghastly Gnome .

A monster of monstrous crime,
 Conceived from the earliest time;
 From the horrible womb of Hell,
 This loathsome infant fell!
 A Despot without control,
 His food is the human soul;
 And, though millions the Fiend destroys,
 Yet his hunger never cloys:
 The accursèd God of Gold—
 He hath ruled from the days of old.
 Spirit of Beauty and Truth!—I weep
 For the vigil of grief that thou must keep.

The Voice of the Sacred Past.

Oh weep! oh weep!
 For the vigil that thou must keep.

First Spirit.

Ah, me! I dreamed that this beautiful Sphere,
 Was the home of all that was pure and good;
 And though Evil widely reigns, yet here
 I fondly fancied he never could.
 The creatures of Earth are passing fair,
 They shine like the lovely Spirits of Air;
 And through their eyes a heavenly soul
 Beams as soft as the moon's soft gleam,—
 Alas! why *are* they not what they seem?
 And why do they bear the Fiend's control?
 O sister Spirit! for love's sweet sake,
 Tell me all ere thy Throne I take.

Second Spirit.

A tedious tale, and a tale of woe,
 Of Vice victorious, and Virtue slain;
 Of Demons laughing at Truth laid low,
 And Justice weeping in gyve and chain .
 Shall I tell thee a tale like this ?
 Shall I cloud thy dreams of bliss ?
 Shall I show thee the murderer's knife,
 Whetted for human life ?
 Shall I show thee the modest maid,
 By her trusting love betrayed ?
 Or Religion brought to shame,
 By wretches in God's high name ?
 Or the vile and worthless prized ?
 Or the noble and true despised ?
 Spirit of Beauty and Truth ! ah, me !
 Lonely and sad must thy vigil be .

The Voice of the Sacred Past.

Ah, me ! ah, me !
 Sad is the vigil reserved for thee .

First Spirit.

O rare, O beautiful Earth ! O Sky !
 Zoned with ten thousand Worlds of Light ;
 O myriad Spirits, who dwell on high !
 O Thou, who wieldest the Thunder's might !
 Can creatures of clay like these be found,
 To work such deeds on God's holy ground ?
 Did He build this exquisite Paradise
 Of garden and glen, and vale and mount,
 And sunny scene and crystal fount,

For a huge bazaar, where the monster Vice
 Traffics in human souls for gold,
 And the angel Virtue is bought and sold?

Second Spirit.

I cannot tell why the Earth was made,
 I know not why Man was formed from clay;
 But the Fiend of Gold too long hath played
 Such tricks as darken the light of day.
 And the Star of the holy Truth
 Hath sunk in a cloud uncouth;
 And the Virtue that should have shone
 Upon Earth is dead and gone;
 And the Science that once was prized,
 Is laughed at and all despised;
 And Faith hath departed long—
 And Justice is killed by wrong—
 And Modesty's blush hath ceast
 Since the reign of the baleful Beast,
 Who laughs and quaffs in his Palace Hall,
 And holds his slaves like swine in thrall.

First Spirit.

But are there not Souls filled with light and love,
 The shrine of the One, the Serene and Wise,
 Who, like heavenly planets that smile from above,
 Can still the storms in the Earth that rise?
 Have The Powers that throne them on thunder sent
 No Spirits to Earth on such mission bent?
 Have the Gods divine forgotten the race
 Of mortal Man, and left him lone,
 In the night of the mind to pine and moan,

Thus in his desolate dwelling-place ?
 Or is this World of Beauty a Hell,
 Where the Satans only rule and dwell ?

Second Spirit.

This beautiful World is a Hell indeed,
 Where the Satans hold their terrible sway,
 And The Powers have left in their hour of need,
 The race of Men in their wilful way .
 For the Spirits of Love and Light,
 Whom they sent to preach Truth and Right,
 And whose hearts they filled with a fire
 Divine, to make Men aspire ;
 And whose minds were by Wisdom taught,
 And whose souls were with Beauty fraught,
 Fallen from their high estate,
 At the board of the Demon wait,
 And pervert the immortal flame,
 To deeds of disgrace and shame :—
 A sight that hath made me mourn and weep,
 In the watching that I was wont to keep .

First Spirit.

Alas ! I weep at the tale I hear—
 The sorrowful tale from thy lips divine ;
 And my heart is filled with a terrible fear :—
 Oh, would that some other Sphere were mine !
 But, tell me—oh tell, ere thy flight begins,
 What Spirits of God have changed to Sin's ?
 Are any on earth, or have any been
 In the dreary year of thy vigil sad ?
 Ah, me ! thy tidings have made me mad ;

They cling in my brain like arrows keen ;
 And I long for the hour that shall set me free
 From my watch of sorrow and misery .

Second Spirit.

There *is* a Spirit on Earth whose course
 Is nearly run—thou shalt see him die !
 Whose soul was lit from the purest source
 Of immortal Light that glows on high .
 But the glorious gifts of God,
 In the mire of passion he trod :
 He lived but to serve himself ;
 He became the slave of the Elf ;
 He fed and grew fat on pride ;
 He hated, he fawned, he lied .
 His heart was dead and cold
 As Judas's heart of old ;
 He never did one good deed,
 To a soul who stood in need :
 And the lessons he taught Mankind were few,
 And none that could make them good or true .

The Voice of the Sacred Past.

Eighty years and two have rolled,
 Since this Soul found human mould,
 Eighty years and two have passed,
 Since with mortal clay 'twas massed ;
 But in all that stirring time,
 What engaged that Soul sublime ?
 Flirtings false as serpent's tears,
 Worthless friendships, useless sneers,

Hours of selfish sloth and thought ;
 Virtue spurned and good unsought ;
 Childish love of baubles called
 Titles, for the which he crawled
 On his belly all his days ;
 Fixing not on Heaven his gaze ;
 Freedom, which is man's birthright,
 Found no favour in his sight ;
 To the starry march of Mind,
 Through his Land his eyes were blind ;
 Liberty's immortal aim,
 Formed his jeer, his mock, his game ;
 Serfs content, and souls debased,
 Suited best this Statesman's taste.
 And the lessons that he gave,
 Might make an infidel or knave,
 But never freeman of the slave .

First Spirit.

But will not this Spirit of Light repent,
 And atone ere death for the mind misused ?
 The priceless gem which the Godhead lent,
 Should have been through earth like a lamp diffused,
 That all who in Valleys of Darkness sit,
 Might illumine their sorrowing souls from it .

Second Spirit.

That time is past, and the hour is nigh,
 Thou shalt see this erring Mortal die .
 He dies—his mission is unfulfilled,
 / As his ever must be whose sole design
 Is a gorgeous temple to Self to build,
 And The Human prefers to The Great Divine .

But, rejoice; for a brighter era of days,
 Shines like a Sun through the living haze :
 A new and celestial Race shall grow,
 And their spirits yclothed in fire from Heaven,
 Shall come, and proclaim in the thunder's steven,
 Truth to the hearts that are steeped in woe ;—
 And the mind of Man shall burst
 In the end the bonds accurst ;
 And his soul shall walk in pride,
 With Truth for its godlike guide ;
 And Knowledge shall rule the world,
 And Falsehood to hell be hurled ;
 And Genius and Worth shall shine,
 Like the stars in the Milky Sign ;
 And Liberty sit enthroned,
 And Slavery die disowned ;—
 Spirit of Beauty ! these things shall be :
 They are writ in the Book of Destiny .

The Voice of the Veiled Future.

I am what is, and hath been, and shall be,
 And those great days Mankind on earth shall see.

First Spirit.

O blest Prediction ! O Eternal Voices
 Sent from the Palaces of Heaven ! my soul
 Pants with celestial rapture—leaps—rejoices,
 To hear the words of Truth in thunder roll
 In glorious prophecy from Pole to Pole .

O man of woman born! awake, arise!
 Gird up thy soul with Wisdom, Knowledge, Truth!
 Let her, like eagles, straight renew her youth,
 And soar aloft to Heaven—the good man's prize;
 O ye pure Spirits! sent from God to teach—
 Eloquence, Knowledge, Poesy divine,
 Come forth in majesty and beauty!—each
 Bent to fulfil the Maker's great design.
 Thousands of years have sunk into the vast
 And mystic grave of Death to wake no more:
 Oh! be it yours from many a hallowed store,
 To cull the Sacred Wisdom of the Past,
 And pour it forth upon the world like light,
 Till Ignorance and Vice, the fiends, take flight,
 At the fair dawning of those golden beams
 Of Truth, and Virtue, Charity and Love,
 Foreseen in many a godlike Poet's dreams;
 Pictures of things that are in Heaven above.

*The SPIRIT OF THE OLD YEAR departs, as the SPIRIT OF THE NEW
 YEAR ascends the Throne.*

SCENE II.

EARLY MORNING.

The open country near WEIMAR. Time, March 22, 1832.

Eckermann.

How beautiful is Morn ! The virgin light
Breaks from behind yon dewy hills that veil
The Palace of the Dawn, from whose vast gates
The white-winged steeds that bear Aurora forth,
Leap, proudly pawing the pellucid skies ;
The rose-cheeked Hours flash sunshine o'er the world,
And from their floating tresses wreathed with light,
And waving like a comet's flowery rays,
Sprinkle rich perfume o'er the winds that wake
The delicate hyacinths from their silver sleep ;
Sunbeams, soft airs, the song of birds, blue skies,
With orange light and purple interfused,
And musical waters sparkling, as their waves
Dance in delight over the pebbly beds
That glitter down below, like jewelled walks
Paven by Naiads for their favourite rills ;
The hum of pastoral labour, the green fields
Fresh with the dews, the gently-tapering smoke
From cottage roofs, the cock's delighted crow ;
The glistening sheen of white and fairy feet
Across the living emerald of the meads ;
Young girls and laughing boys and gambolling youth ;

And the cow lowing, and the brisk young horse,
 With ears attent and limbs refreshed for toil ;
 And the grave honest watch-dog up and out
 Beside his master, whose clear joyous whistle
 Tells of content—a heart at peace with all.

From such a scene of beauty and repose,
 Sadly I turn to yonder Town, where ebbs
 The mighty Life away that charmed the world
 With its rare harmony ; broken are the strings
 Of that celestial lyre, and sad and faint
 The last soft murmurs through its exquisite breast.
 The wondrous Master sinks in final sleep,
 Gloriously fading, like the sun that set
 Last night behind the azure mountain-peaks.
 The undetermined hour at length has come—
 He who strove ever after Possible Good,
 And shunned the Unattainable with a wisdom
 Deep as the patriarch's, dies ; and, dying, leaves
 No soul on earth of equal might with his—
 Greatest of all the race of modern men
 Since Byron went. In him was shadowed forth
 The true Poetic—action made sublime
 By heroic purpose—whose whole aim was bent
 To show in all their nothingness and guilt,
 The False, Distorted, Vulgar, to men's gaze,
 That they might hate and shun them.

How my soul
 Recalls the words he spake a few days since,
 While o'er his medals we conversed : *As long
 As man creates there is no room for dying ;*

*But yet the Night, the Great Night, will come on
 When none shall work.* Alas! I little thought
 The night of that great Soul so near as now
 Rumour reports. Now does he pass away,
 On whom the Gods smiled sweetly at his birth;
 Whom Venus loved and cradled in her breast;
 Whose eyes Apollo kissed, whose lips were touched
 By graceful Mercury—on whose brow Jove set
 The seal of might—away, away for ever;
 Leaving on earth only his pure renown,
 To comfort those who live but see him not.

Why are we here? I asked. He paused, and looked,
 And, smiling like a god, said, *That we may
 Immortalise ourselves; and no true man
 Suffers this creed to be torn from his breast.*
 Nobly and truly has he won the crown
 Undying for whose light he struggled long;
 While we, alas!—but why indulge the thought?
 Yet if there be a few to whom his life
 Seemed an enigma, and the good he did
 In his broad sphere unworthy the professions
 Which he might make, or *did* make, let them pause
 Ere they pronounce harsh judgment. Men nor angels
 Read not the wonderful mysteries of the soul,
 Which is a trinity, as the Platonists hold,
 Divine, angelical, and animal,
 A rare and heavenly compound of whose essence
 We nothing know. The part that man sustains
 Upon this mystic theatre, the earth,
 Strange in its mixture of the True and False,
 Is even to loftiest Seraphim a thing

All veiled ; and only can the highest Gods
 Pronounce upon it, whether good or bad.
 That which to eyes of spirits, or of flesh,
 Seems outwardly a Vice, may be to God
 The pure sublime of Virtue ; that which wears
 The dazzling snowy semblance of the True,
 Which the wise Cherubim behold with joy,
 May to The Powers appear the thing it is—
 Black Vice enmasqued. Thus Angels, Spirits, and Men
 Err ever in their judgment of Man's ways ;
 And this should bid them pause ere they condemn.

[*Song of a MILKMAID, heard outside.*]

There is a beauteous little dame,
 Take care, take care ;
 Mary is this beauty's name ;
 Ah ! Sir, beware !
 She has eyes like some young fawn's
 Tripping wild on Eastern lawns,
 And her white and gentle feet,
 Lightly dance to music sweet.
 Ah ! take care.

She has little snowy hands,
 Take care, take care ;
 Like white lilies twined in bands ;
 Ah ! Sir, beware !
 When she strikes her light kitar,
 See them glitter like a star ;
 Feel them, too, like roses, soft,
 Kiss them—if she'll let you—oft.
 Ah ! take care.

She has ringlets richly brown,
 Take care, take care ;
Lovelier than a jewelled crown ;
 Ah ! Sir, beware !
You are lost if once you press
To your lips one silken tress ;
They are nets of love that hold,
By some magic, young and old.
 Ah ! take care.

She has temples fair and white,
 Take care, take care ;
Like the crescent moon at night ;
 Ah ! Sir, beware !
And a beauteous heaving breast,
With two rosy buds imprest ;
They are there, I know, but she
Veils them up most cunningly,
 Ah ! take care.

She has roses in her mouth,
 Take care, take care ;
Sweeter than the fragrant South ;
 Ah ! Sir, beware !
If you see her crimson lip,
Ten to one you'll long to sip ;
But so guarded is the fruit,
You must snatch, or lose your suit.
 Ah ! take care.

She is witty, young, and wild,
 Take care, take care ;

Playful, like a little child ;

Ah ! Sir, beware !

Beauty, goodness, wit, combine,

To make little Poll divine ;

Never fairer form enshrined

A more sweet or playful mind.

Ah ! take care.

When she sings, and when she speaks,

Take care, take care ;

When she plays her pretty freaks,

Ah ! Sir, beware !

In a trice you'll find your heart,

From its lawful owner part,

And the beauteous little dame,

Say 'tis hers by lawful claim.

Ah ! take care.

Eckermann.

A pretty song—a pretty maid—a morn

All beauty, and a sky all sunny-hued,

Are things so rarely meeting, that I must

Entreat a kiss to make it quite Elysium.

Milkmaid.

You may entreat, Sir Scholar, till you're tired,

But, trust me, you shall fail.

Eckermann.

Nay, do not pout

So charmingly with those sweet scarlet lips,

Rivalling roses in their perfumed blush,

And warbling sweetlier than the speckled lark.

Milkmaid.

Go—kiss the Muses whom you worship, Sir;
You shall not kiss *me*, even in a dream.

Eckermann.

She's gone: I never saw a lovelier face,
Or whiter ancle as she steps along;
How trippingly she crosses o'er that stile.
Were I Anacreon I might wish myself
A cow; but not being Greek, I'm satisfied
To be a German still. By Zeus! she looks
So roguishly behind that I shall follow.
This is a very pantomimic change
From grave to gay; but such is life: she smiles
Again—ah! blue eyes, I am coming quick;—
Nay, though you ran as fast as Atalanta,
I have a golden spell will stay your flight.

THREE DESTINIES.

First Destiny.

From the cloud-caverns, where we dwell; from Night's
Dun palaces in Hadès, shadowy, vast,
And boundless, we float hither on the blast
Of Eurus, on unwelcome mission bent;
The hour is come—the blissful Past is past;
A voice like mighty Ocean's has gone forth,
And called the Spirit-ones
From Heaven, from Hadès, and from trembling Earth.

Second Destiny.

Lo! where young Mercury, like a sunbeam, lights
Upon the radiant hills, Olympus-sent,

His crystal-gleaming plumes on head and heel,
Flashing new lustre o'er the face of dawn ;—

They live—Napæan-haunted wood and lawn ;
They live with life enchanted ; hill and stream

Send forth their gods,
That long lay hushed in rosy-breathing dream.

Third Destiny.

And from the million-peopled firmament
Of joy and splendour leap young Nymph and Faun,
Satyr and Mænad, Angel flowery-crowned,
Shining with rays that dim the diamond stars ;
A thousand Elves in airy circles wheel,
Spirits of light and shade, careering round,
As Morn her aureate gates
Of sunshine, wide to smiling worlds unbars,

First Destiny.

The sevenfold veils that wrap the Future burst
Away, the coming hour stands out in glory ;
Unto mine eye alone shines forth the story
Of him whom now the Old Arch Foe accurst,
Comes from his hells, with blood of millions gory,
— And gorged like fierce hyena of the wild,
To bear away.—The flattering hopes he nurst
So long—so ruthlessly, shall fade—shall fall,
Like the card palaces of some wayward child.

[*A peal of thunder.*]

Voice from Above.

Rash Destiny, forbear :
The Future stands revealed to Me alone,—
Forbear!—

The Sons of Heaven—the powerful Prince of Air,
Unto their eyes must not be shown,
Until the destined hour secrets thou hast not known.
Forbear ! rash Destiny, forbear !
[*The FIRST DESTINY shrinks, and cowers into a cloud.*

SCENE III

WEIMAR.

*An open Place in front of GOETHE'S House at WEIMAR.—
HERMES and MEPHISTOPHELES, entering from opposite sides
meet.*

Hermes.

Good morrow, Squire : I really feel delighted,
To see your Highness look so devilish well.
What brings you hither ? Do you come invited
By the Grand Duke, with latest news from Hell ?

Mephistopheles.

Ah, my dear younker, of immortal Maïa,
I'm very glad to take you by the hand :
You look as merry as the fair Aglaïa,
When capering zoneless on the silver sand.
I really envy you your snowy feathers—
They're so much better than the cloven hoof :
In this the coldest of all cold March weathers,
You're rather early from your father's roof.

Hermes.

I've come to take some souls to your dominions,
For which I'll scarcely get their thanks, I fear.

Mephistopheles.

Hoo—pooh !—what care you for the fools' opinions ?

Hermes.

Not much, perhaps.—But, coz, what brings *you* here

Mephistopheles.

To make a morning call on an old sinner
 Who lives close by—a cherished friend of mine;
 Native of that free town whose Jews grow thinner,
 As years pass on, through holy hate of swine:
 Though why old Moses pooh-pooh'd pork for dinner,
 I ne'er could learn: do *you* know cousin mine?

Hermes.

I' faith I don't, and care not:—what new scandals?

Mephistopheles.

I supped last night with some demure old maids,
 Who vowed, as I was taking off their sandals,
 That all their sex were most confounded jades.
 You may be sure they never spare the goddesses;
 They mauled your mother Maïa black and blue;
 They said the women should be cased in bodices,
 Laced tightly from the bosom to the shoe;
 And as to men, they swore they all were rascals,
 Deceivers, liars, dandies, drunkards, beasts—
 I've not enjoyed myself so much since Pascal's
 Delicious letters about nuns and priests.

Hermes.

I wonder what you find in such society,
 So stale, so mouldy, and so sour, to please.

Mephistopheles.

I scarcely know, except it be variety,
 And that *is* something in dull times like these;
 I also like the sickening cant of piety,
 With which they sprinkle o'er their cups of teas.

Old maids and tom-cats!—did you ever fancy
 That I, the wildest of our seraph race,
 Should seek amusement in a source so base?
 I wish I were an ass, or goose, or noddy,
 Or any very stupid bird or beast,
 Exempt from mind or thought, with only body
 To care for, and to sleep, and leap, and feast.

Hermes.

A very noble wish, my dearest Devil;
 I hope you'll get it some auspicious day.

Mephistopheles.

Amen! But now, to have a half-hour's revel,
 Here with a piece of crumbling human clay;
 I marked him from the time he said he'd rather
 Be byeblow to some lord of high degree,
 Than sprung from any honest humble father,
 Or modest mother, sans a family tree.
 Thus he grew sycophant of starveling princes,—
 A mere bread-scholar working but for self,
 Whose whole career, from birth to death, evinces,
 But a he-Jezebel's for place and pelf.

Hermes.

I've come on the same errand; but *my* duty
 Is to release the spirit from its cell:
 Which done, we'll gang together with the booty,
 If you'll permit, the shortest way to Hell.

Mephistopheles.

With all my heart—'twill give me special pleasure,
 To have your company upon the road;

Conducting such a precious priceless treasure,
 As the Old Sneerer to his last abode.
 But we've delayed too long—suppose we enter,
 And take our station by the Bard's bedside.

Hermes.

Most willingly—lead on, right reverend Mentor;
 To a lost soul I know no better guide.
 But softly—softly—who comes floating hither,
 With gentle heavenly eyes and wings of light?

Hephistopheles.

DEATH, by the Lard! I feel my marrow wither
 Within me, when that Spirit comes in sight.
 Let us be off—I hate to look upon her.

Hermes.

Immortal beauty shrouds her silent course—

Hephistopheles.

Come, coz, I will not wait, upon my honour:
 Away! or I will drag you off by force.

[*They enter the house.*]

SCENE IV.

THE SKY.

Flight of the GUARDIAN ANGEL. The Farewell Song.

Oh! and alas for thee! spirit of splendour,
 Born in bright heaven, but fashioned to woe;
 Long have I watched thee with fondness as tender,
 As only the hearts of young mothers can know;
 Long, from the first placid hour of thy springing
 On earth, like an innocent flower in its bloom,
 Till now when the cold hand of Destiny's bringing
 The mist that shall wrap thee for ever in gloom.

Clear shone the stars on their thrones,⁴ and serenely
 Silence smiled o'er the calm brows of the skies;
 When, as I watched, came a Presence most queenly,
 Borne on swift lightnings, and bade me, Arise!
 This was *thy* Genius, and thus was I chosen,
 Even in that hour thine own Angel to be;
 Whiter than dew in the winter flowers frozen,
 Was thy young soul when 'twas yielded to me.

Gently I stood by thee, guarding thy childhood,
 Filling thy new life with sweetness and love,
 Till, like a lark's happy songs in the wild wood,
 Rose thy glad thoughts to thy first home above.
 Fountains of crystal through valleys descending,
 Were not so pure as thy spirit was then;
 Like the bright rainbow with earth and sky blending,
 Seemed thy clear heart ere its mixture with men.

Then came a change o'er thee,—all that was vernal
 Faded, and wasted, and withered away,
 Even as young Paradise, when the Eternal
 Spake, and it vanished, and all was decay ;—
 Gone were the flowers which the angels had planted,
 Gone the fair sunshine that lightened the scene ;
 Silent the music that once had enchanted,
 Silent as though its voice never had been.

There, where the Virtues had made them a palace,
 Golden and virgin, and grand and divine,
 In rushed the Passions,—and each bore a chalice
 Brimming with poisons that tempted like wine :
 Till that chaste soul, which I fondled and tended
 Truly and faithfully, faltered and failed,
 Spurning the counsels I gave it, and bended
 Down in the dust to the foes that assailed.

Sadly I wept, and would still fain awaken
 Visions within thee, aspirings sublime ;
 Still would I tempt thee to pathways forsaken,
 Pointing to heights where thy spirit should climb ;
 Even while I soared on the wings of the morning,
 Through those star-realms where the Seraphim reign,
 Hopes would allure, and would paint thee yet scorning
 Vice and the World and the flesh with disdain.

Round thee, unseen by thee, like sunshine o'er thee,
 Morning and night saw me fixed by thy side :
 All the winged splendours of thought that before thee
 Burst like a heaven were the gifts of thy guide.

Spirits I brought to thee, Visions and Dreamings,
 Voices of angels, to win thee once more ;
 But the dark Idols of Earth whose false seemings
 Charmed thee, were all that thy soul would adore.

Oh ! and alas for thee ! deep was thine error,
 Fatal the change to the False from the True !
 Ever since then the thick darkness of Terror,
 Known to the fallen ones, still round thee grew.
 Manhood confessed it—Old Age shrank in sadness,
 Awed by the prospect of death and the grave ;
 Now, when thou'rt dying, and owning thy madness,
 Gladly I'd claim thee, and gladly I'd save.

But the great voice of The One hath forbidden ;
 I must away, and *thou* too must depart ;
 Ere a short hour, and the secret that's hidden
 Deep in the skies shall illumine thine heart.
 Oh ! and alas for thee—exiled for ever,
 Some ray of happiness still o'er thee dwell :
 I, thy true Angel, still love thee, and never
 Came from my heart more despairing farewell.

CHORUS OF EVIL SPIRITS IN THE AIR.

Iö—

The destined hour,
 When he who baffled still the demon-power
 Of earth, and fire, and cloud,
 The thunder-folded Passions of black Hell,
 To whose high will he bowed
 The seraph-soul within,
 In sin—

,Lowly as bowed the Mother of mankind
 Before the Undying Foe,
 Her primal Temptor and our Sovereign Lord ;
 Shall pass away,
 Ere dies advancing day ;
 Dim and dark tokens in the sky foretell
 The hour of gloom :
 The trembling beam, the gently-moaning wind,
 The cold white eyes of heaven on earth inclined,
 The shadows of a newly-yawning tomb,
 The hurried flight of Spirits to and fro,
 The rainbow melting into dream-like snow,
 The sad and solemn music of the spheres,
 The muttering thunder's distant, dismal boom,
 The mountains wreathed in azure mists of tears ;
 The airs that sigh o'er forest, stream, and sward,
 The clouds that shed quick drops of rain and flame,
 Proclaim
 The fall of one of Adam's race abhorred.

Iö—

As falls
 An orb of light
 From heaven, to sink in never-ending night ;
 So sinks a destined human soul,
 Ere it attains the fair celestial goal
 That shines aloft on Truth's sun-flashing site :
 While we,
 Children whilom of God, but fire-condemned,
 Exiled from heaven, like Adam's race contemned ;
 Tossing in Space's drear immensity ;
 Cursing the hand relentless that enthral,

In floods of flame, reproach, hate, torment, terror,
 Spirits that yielded to but one wild error,
 Catch with infuriate glee,
 The headlong children of the earth, whom He,
 Baffled in His revenge on us, is fated
 Still to behold fierce rebels to His reign,
 Till, hot with rage at mortals thus created,
 Into our realms of pain
 He hurls them with disdain,
 And hate that preys on His own heart unsated.
 Iö—He made them with His own pure hands
 To stand around His throne
 Where once *we* stood alone——
 He made them for Himself—they serve our hostile bands.

Iö—

The wild-eyed charioteers whom men call Hours,
 Have brought the moment hither, when the Mortal
 Shakes off the chain of life to put on ours,
 Who wait around to form his gay escortal
 Down to the gloomy kings of Sense and Sloth,
 To whom he bound his spirit by an oath,
 Silent, strong, self-imposed, that never breaketh :
 He who serves *them* on earth must serve them there,
 Where starlight gleams not, morning ne'er awaketh ;
 But all is silence, sadness, snake-toothed care,
 Perpetual self-reproach, contempt, remorse, despair.
 And there are pale and weeping Apparitions,
 Some beautiful, and some of heavenly hues,
 Who came to him in waking dreams and visions,
 Tempting him in the form of Nymph and Muse,
 To paths of love ; but yet he would not listen
 To their enchanting voices ;—now they fly

Away in woe; their eyes and features glisten
With saddest tears—nor dare they see him die.

Iö—

He served but us alone—to us he gave
His spirit as a slave;
We come,
Each from his chasmal home,
To follow our good servant to the grave,
And bear his spirit hence in triumph loud and brave.
Man is not ours, nor do we owe him
Aught but revenge, fraud, perfidy, and hate;
Why did not He who formed endow him
With strength to raise above his grovelling fate?

Iö—

SCENE V.

THE BEDROOM.

MEPHISTOPHELES *and* HERMES ; GOETHE *lying in Bed; Busts, Statues, and Pictures all around.*

Goethe (*very faintly*).

My life is waning
 Away like a fading lamp ;
 My feet are straining
 Away to the charnel damp :
 In the clouds of the slumber
 That never knows waking hour,
 In the thoughts that o'ershadow
 The soul with their mystic power ;
 In the star-illumined mists
 That memory draws from my soul ;
 In the fires of the hot Simoom
 Of Sin that around me roll ;
 In the gloom that enclasps my Spirit
 As it dreams of bright chances lost ;
 In the wide and moonless Ocean
 Of doubt where my sense is tost ;
 In the slough of regrets and sorrows
 I sink, while the fiend Remorse
 Asks, what shall I be when to-morrow's
 Bright sun shines over my corse ?—
 I care not—I fear not—but blest shall be
 The stroke that my weary soul sets free :

I fear not—I care not—the all I ask
 Is quittance for ever from Life's dull masque.
 Free, and free as the eagle,
 That soars through the silver air ;
 Free, and free as the lion,
 Sole lord in his forest lair ;
 Or the Ocean that owns no chain ;
 Or the Sun in his wide domain ;
 Or the Winds that rush from their cloudy caves,
 And trample the giant oaks like slaves ;
 My soul, life-weary,
 Pants for unbounded Space,
 And loathes this dreary,
 And viperish dwelling-place,
 And the poison-hearted snake that lies
 Hidden in human lips and eyes.

For Life is a hideous folly ;
 A harlot with painted smile ;
 And madness and melancholy,
 She shoots through the soul the while
 In her baleful arms we dream,
 And drink the venomous stream
 Of her kisses and loathsome breath.
 O fools ! to shun the sweet angel, Death ;
 Who with calm and winning eyes,
 Courts us to yonder skies.
 Come hither, come hither, and crown my cup,
 With the grape's red blood till it sparkles up ;
 Come hither, come hither, and crown it still ;
 My soul draws life from the rosy rill.
 Scorpions lurk in that heart of thine,
 But none there be in this foaming wine.

Let me drown sadness.
 Here's to thee, Death ! sweet friend ;
 Come, like a gladness,
 Come and fulfil the end :
 Wrap me up in thy snowy shroud,
 Binding me round like a gentle cloud.

[*Sinks back exhausted.*]

Mephistopheles.

'Tis rather funny to see these Mortals
 Dying, and breathing out their last ;
 Whenever they come to the Grave's dark portals,
 They give such a terrible kick to the Past.
 To hear their prate when the knaves are gasping,
 How full of contempt for the things of earth :
 Yet all the while you can see them grasping
 Hard to stick in their fleshly berth.
 White-livered fools !—I have watched them dying,
 And heard them swear they were *so* resigned :
 Yet the varlets knew they were foully lying,
 And would have lived still—had they had but wind.

Hermes.

I never heard truth more truly spoken.

Mephistopheles.

Why, how could you think that *I'd* mistake ?
 Their lies would long since my heart have broken ;
 But, alas !—I had no heart to break.

Spirit.

Bring the Past hither ;
 Its joys and its splendours ;

Its woes and its sorrows ;
 Its thin mocking phantoms—
 Before him and round him
 I see them—the shadows
 Of rainbows and tempests,
 The Angels and Daimons,
 The Gnomes and pure Seraphs,
 The fear-breathing Spectres
 Are near—
 Commingling and sighing,
 And laughing and grinning,
 And scoffing and shouting ;
 An atmosphere flashing
 The darkness of terror
 Enwraps them, enfolds them,
 Sustains them and holds them—
 They are here.

Voices.

We are here.

Mephistopheles.

What laughter ! what bother !
 They wrangle and jostle ;
 Each devil's apostle,
 Who comes to this hostel,
 His neighbour would smother ;
 They're scratching and screeching,
 And screeching and scratching,
 At nose and tail catching ;
 The cat-apes and witches
 Are fearfully mingled ;
 God grant that they quarrel
 And eat one another !

Spirit.

The bright shapes of Dreamland,
 With sweet eyes and voices ;
 The wild and the lovely ;
 The fays of the mountain,
 The fays of the woodland,
 The sprites of the waters,
 Like waters soft-gliding ;
 Their eyes beaming heaven,
 Their brows girt with star-beams,
 Wrapped close in their mantles
 Of mourning and sorrow ;
 I see them—I see them—
 In darkness and lightnings,
 In black mists and azure,
 In soft gleams of sunlight,
 Two angels are weeping,
 Like fair statues keeping
 Watch o'er a soul sleeping
 The sleep of the Just.

Voices.

We are here—we are here.

Mephistopheles.

We know it—we see it.
 O charming young monkeys,
 And Venus-tailed witches,
 And ape-faced old beldams,
 And cat-hearted hell-dams,—
 My exquisite children,
 Bow down to your Master—

Voices.

Sir Voland——

Mephistopheles.

Of no land——

From Styx I've come faster
Than ever before for these ten years or more.
Good welcome, glad welcome,
To all that from hell come.

Hermes.

Soft!—he awakes—the swoon hath passed away.

Goethe.

O ye bright moments of my earliest days,
How vividly methinks I feel ye now!
How full of life the fair and happy Past
Rises from the deep ocean of my soul,
Roseate in beauty, freshness, youth, and hope!
Fair Frankfort, city of my childhood, dearer
To me than all the world beside—thy streets
Of ever-lively bustle—thy broad Zeile
Thronged with shrewd dealers skilled in gems of rare
And matchless beauty, and thine antique towers,
The Saalhoff, Römer, and the Virgin's Church,
The bright and boat-thronged Mayn, the arching bridge
Whose sacred Cross so glitters in the sunshine;
The many massive forts and frowning gates
That gird thee in, the belt of flower-bright gardens
That stretch beyond and round thee; the green trees,
Linden and Poplar, in whose cooling shade
So oft I've gambolled like a happy bird;—

Lo! how they pass before my eyes, those old
 And well-remembered pictures of delight,
 Freshly as if I'd seen them yesterday.

The garden-room of strange and delicate plants,
 And the large windows, through whose opened panes
 The sun poured in a rich and luminous flood,
 Instinct with life and strength, ripening the buds,
 Until they burst in fragrant splendour forth;—
 Here would I sit, a wild yet thoughtful Boy,
 Gazing beyond the City's walls and ramparts,
 Over the picture-like and fertile plain
 That leads to Höchst; and here, with book in hand,
 I meditated o'er the historic past,
 Or thought upon the future, painting life
 In hope's bewitching colours; here I watched
 The thunder-storms rush down from the far hills,
 And looked enraptured on the setting sun,
 That made the western clouds to fancy seem
 A mass of diamond palaces, a world
 Of faërie structures, and of magical beauty,
 Built for the gods alone.

O wandering Shapes,
 That rise in star-shine and in melody round me,
 Beckoning me on with fond and beaming eyes,
 Whence have ye come, and whither do ye wend?
 Pale and most spirit-white your features seem,
 Like lilies in the moonlight bathed in dew.
 Whence are these exquisite voices? Whence the hymns
 Of sad celestial sweetness that ye raise?
 Who strikes that harp with silver strings so gently?

Whose the sweet breath that courses through this flute
 Of ivory? and whose the hand that draws
 From this soft lute ambrosial harmonies?
 I feel an atmosphere of waving light,
 Brighter than chrysolite, more pure than flame,
 Round me and in me; rapidly ye rise,
 Ye musical undulations born of fire,
 That hath a soul within it and a sense.
 Ye are as off-shoots from the Evening Star,
 Or as the lightnings that enwrap the steeds
 Of rosy-breathing Morning—but the songs
 Ye sing are of the saddest, mournfullest strain,
 That ever fell like sorrow on the ear.

Chorus of Angelic Spirits (vanishing slowly).

Spirit of splendour,
 Linked to corruption;
 Star-bright, enshrouded
 Deeply in darkness;
 Lo!—from the portal,
 Pure and star-shining,
 Where the Eternal
 Children of Heaven,
 Ever inclining
 To the Supernal
 Joyously render
 Hymns of thanksgiving;
 We, the bright, living
 Angels all willing,
 To guard thee and guide thee,
 And still cling beside thee,
 Through life and its terrors,

Its falsehoods, its errors,
 Its vices, its horrors,
 Hither have flown
 Sadly and sadly,
 To see thee once more,
 Ere the soul shall depart
 And the struggle be o'er.
 Fare thee well, fare thee well!
 Weary one, weary one.
 Soul of the Minstrel!
 Fare thee well, fare thee well!

Goethe.

O Life, warm life, I feel thee passing from me;
 The spirits that are near, methinks are come
 To bear me from this Orb upon their wings
 Far to some airy realm beyond the ken
 Of human eye or fancy. Lo! the gauds
 And glittering mists that promised fair, and lied;
 The purple pageantry of life, the noise,
 Excitement, folly, madness, pomp, and crime,
 That form the world's existence, fade away,
 For ever, into unsubstantial nothing,
 Like thinnest smoke dissolved by mighty winds;
 And only this remains—a faint old man,
 With wasted limbs, scant hair, and soulless eyes,
 Trembling upon the giddy verge of death;
 Loathing the stage whereon he played a part
 Unfit for one who bore upon his soul
 A heavenly impress of the true Divine.
 Is it then come to this?—Is glory nothing?
 Learning a straw?—renown and power a rush

Thrown on Time's Ocean to be swallowed up,
And no man know its fate? Pleasure and pride,
Ambition, splendour, wealth, and worshipping crowds;
The smiles of woman, the delights of sense,
Are they but fantasies and follies all?—
Mere exhalations of distempered dreams?
Unreal as hues from many-coloured glass,
Painted and flattering—but false, most false?
Man an ephemeron, that lives his day,
Eats, drinks, dies, rots, like his poor fellow worm—
Could I recall my youth, my strength, my days,
And walk into the Past of Life, once more
Schooled by experience of the paltry prize
For which man stakes eternity of being—
Alas! I rave, and dream what ne'er can be.
As well attempt to stay the flowing tides,
Chain up the furious winds, arrest the lightning,
Or stop the thunder-march of the lordly sun,
As bid the Past return.

A strain of music

Seems borne on mists of sunshine through my soul,
And million-peopled Dreams, or living Visions,
Crowd round me, full of life and active passion;
And there are beauteous landscapes, and fair skies,
And genial meetings, and enchanted hours,
And tones of old and well-remembered songs,
And spirit-shapes bringing my life before me;
And some are clad in beauty, such as crowned
The angels ere they fell from heaven through pride;
And now methinks the lovely phantasm passes,
And all seems vacant, misty, undefined,

And dark as Chaos, ere reduced to form :
 They move again—the light streams in—and now
 A broken cloud of fire and darkness rises
 Like the dun smoke of flaming hell ; I see
 A myriad weird and wondrous things of terror,
 Such as wild Fancy ne'er could picture forth,
 Save to the maniac's wandering eyes of fear,—
 A tremulous purple light, a spectral mist
 Of icy coldness withering o'er my soul,
 Which shrinks within herself ; a cold grey gleam,
 Like the still eyes of wolfish Hate, seems round
 My spirit's form, and drags it down and down.
 Away, away, sad phantoms ! Hence, away !
 Still, still they press upon my heart and brain ;
 Methinks I sink amid a sea of groans,
 And songs, and fire, and lightnings. Yon tall Shape,
 Like a star fallen and blasted—myriad voices,
 Hissing and mocking—lo ! the living waves
 Of spiritual life, some bright, some black :—
 The thunder peals a wild unearthly peal,
 Reverberating ever, ever, and ever—
 Avaunt, Erynnis, Fury, hag—avaunt !

Spirit.

Lo ! in mists I bring before thee
 One of those dim recollections,
 Which upon thy childhood's morning,
 Broke with fatal error o'er thee ;
 Poisoning all thy young affections,
 Which even then were ripe for scorning
 All whose inmost soul and spirit
 Thou, poor worm, who didst inherit
 Thy first mother's curious prying,

Could'st not read.—The wild thoughts born in
That sad hour I've seen pursue thee
Thence till now, when they undo thee.

'Tis so ever—he who doubted

Early thus ; mocked, jeered, and flouted,
Ends at last with all denying.

Goethe.

Hark ! heard ye not the sound of rushing waters,
Of clouds embattled, of the quivering bolt,
Of thunders winged with lightning, of the earth
Yawning and gaping wide, till in her maw
Of death and darkness a fair city sinks ?
Palaces, Churches, Towers, all engulfed,
And sixty thousand spirits freed by death
In one fierce agonizing moment ?—Yes,
The Giant of the Earthquake ! See—He stamps
His foot—and men ask where is Lisbon now !
Ye Gods, inscrutable in judgment, what
Have these, the young, the innocent, and pure,
The good and gentle, thus consigned to torture,
Done to arouse the terrors of this wrath ?
Creators of the Universe—Preservers
Of heaven and earth, benignant, wise, and good
For such our primal prayers declare ye are,
And being prayers, of course they cannot lie,
How can ye joy in chastisement like this ?
How can ye laugh at human suffering ?
How can ye stoop from the star-paven skies,
And thrones of ever-beaming sunshine, thus
To wreak black vengeance on a helpless worm,
Weak as a straw in such omnipotent hands ?
Is this fit pastime for the glorious Gods ?

They say the ways of heaven are wonderful.
 Man cannot read them—and he *must* not try.
 Why must he not? I, who was but a child
 When these things happened, from that hour to this
 Have reasoned on them, yet could ne'er discover
 The force of that parental love which sent
 The blood-stained Titan forth to wreak this woe.

Mephistopheles.

Why, this is the silliest poet-raving
 That ever I heard since old time began ;
 Only think of this two-legged grasshopper craving
 The soul of the Ancient of Days to scan !
 The child who scooped a hole near the ocean,
 And thought the hole would the seas contain,
 Was as wise as this numskull, who has a notion
 That Infinity is not too large for his brain.

Hermes.

Yet the proud spirit shrined in man will pry
 Into the secrets of the vast Unknown ;
 And strive to read with quick and curious eye,
 The wonders of those worlds beyond his own.

Mephistopheles.

Ay, so he will ; but his aim is stupid,
 For pry as he may, he will nothing find ;
 You know Dame Fortune and Master Cupid—
 Well, Man is ten thousand times more blind.
 That very same earthquake I well remember,
 And could a most curious tale unfold ;
 It happened one day in a bleak November,
 When this hopeful brat was but six years old.

There were poisoners, players, and country cousins,
And critics, and dandies, and flirts, and duns,
And poets who should have been damned in dozens,
In that Catholic city of monks and nuns.
There were bishops in mitre and cope—great schemers,
With saintly faces and gluttonous maws,
Who thought religion a farce for dreamers,
And believed the Apostles were mere jackdaws ;
There were magistrates trained to all sorts of sinnings,
And bravos, who stabbed in the public streets ;
There were elderly ladies whose nightly winnings
At cards were a series of nightly cheats ;
There were newspaper scribblers—we'll call them writers,
With hearts of reptiles and tongues of toads ;
There were Quakers, for purity clamorous fighters,
Who went to Sin's haunts by the privatest roads ;
There were usurers, tribads, and blasphemous friars,
With eight or nine sprouts of the House of Guelph ;
There were numbers who thought that the father of liars,
The Pope, was a Christian as true as myself ;
There were booksellers, publishers, priests, and actors,
Inquisitors, hangmen, and similar folks—
The best people there were the known malefactors,
Who openly sinned without masks or cloaks ;
There were Judges who sold the law to the briber,
And spitted the weak as young boys spit flies ;
There were Jesuits, too, from the banks of Tiber,
And eight or nine hundred pimps and spies ;
There were women whose sole delight was scandal,
Who vended their souls like goods in a mart ;
Had Diogenes come with his best wax candle,
He could not have found out one taintless heart ;

Nay, had *you*, my friend, brought your golden apple
 From Heaven, inscribed *For an honest man*,
 You'd have found it a difficult thing to grapple
 With one, though from end to end you ran;
 Yet with all these facts, here's a poet and scholar
 ('Tis perfectly plain he has lost his wits),
 Getting into a fit of poetical choler,
 Because this Lisbon was knocked to bits.

Hermes.

I'm glad to hear your Highness, like blind Milton,
 Thus vindicate the ways of God to man.

Mephistopheles.

The blundering insects always lay the guilt on
 Where they should not—as if such worms *could* span,
 With their small brains, the purposes divine:
 Like maggots crawling in a world of Stilton,
 That seek to know the nature of moonshine.—
 A Goose, the stupidest bird, says old Montaigne,
 (Who, though a man, had much of Lucifer's wit)
 Walked out one night, when all the heavens were lit
 With the immortal jewelry of stars,
 And cackled thus: O ever bounteous Jove!
 Accept my thanks for making million worlds
 Blazing with pomp to shed their rays on me,
 The elegant object of your ceaseless love,
 And light me to the worms that are my prey.
 I scarcely know the use of so much sea,
 But feel obliged that you have made the sun
 For my especial pleasure in the day.
 The limpid waters, and the enamelled earth,
 With flowers on which I gambol in goose-mirth,

Are very pretty things ; yet I feel angry
 You've made *some* very foolish blunders, Jove :
 You should have made our notes a nightingale's,
 And given such noble birds a stately gait
 And step majestic, as if lords of fate ;
 With peacock hues you should have decked our tails :
 Had you done this, you'd have done better, wiser,
 For as it is, you've acted like a miser :
 However, my Old Gentleman, I thank you ;
 And so I'll find as few faults as I can
 With your economy and nature's plan.
 Good night, dear Jove, my benison attend you.
 How was this Goose more silly than wise Man,
 Who swears, like her, that the whole Universe
 Was made for his vile ends, and his alone ?
 And when he sees therein a certain something
 He cannot comprehend, vows instantly,
 With rashness worthy of the anserian dumb thing,
 The Gods are in the fault—and not *his* brains ;
 Which know of God what blind men know of light,
 The deaf of music, or the toad of heaven.
 'Twould anger me, but that my rage is lost
 In deep disgust, and hatred of the wretches.

Hermes.

Nay, but these insects play *your* game, my cousin,
 By their mad dreams.

Mephistopheles.

I grant ye, that they do ;
 Is that the reason I should close my mouth,
 Or shut my eyes to their egregious folly ?
 'Tis not for *my* sake, Coz, they do these things,

But for their own, for vanity, self-love ;
 And if they go to Hell, I thank them not,
 Nor am I bound to falsehood for the worms ;
 The course they take is the straight path to me.
 They hate each other, and blaspheme their Maker ;
 Is it for this that I should play the slave,
 And stand up to defend them ? No. I love
 The sins, but hate with all my soul the sinners.
 And when I hear the mites sophisticate
 Against the Lord, to whom I am a rebel,
 Even for old times, and old remembrance' sake,
 I cannot but give utterance to the scorn
 I feel ; and though against my will, confess
 The omnipotence of Truth thus outraged by them.
 We pat them on the backs to sin, we laugh
 At their strange lunacy, and thank them not,
 But rather loathe them for being fooled by us.
 This is plain speaking—but I love to say
 Just as I think—no phrases fine for me,
 Such as your Miltons, Byrons, and the rest
 Of the poetic mammals, dream for us.
 Ye Gods, defend me from poetic speech !

. Spirit.

With a wreath on her brow,
 Like a beautiful bride's,
 Down the blue depths of heaven
 The rainbow-winged glides,
 On a cloud of pure silver ;
 A lyre in her hand ;
 And the cestus she wears
 Is a bright diamond band.

The splendour of light
 Flashes forth where she looks;
 Her eyes are the crystal
 Of sun-lighted brooks.
 Her smiles are soft music,
 Her breath is the rose;
 Her glance calm and sweet as
 Love's Star in repose.

Fragrant is the air with music,
 Which she wafts around;
 Radiant is the flowing sunshine
 From the amaranth-crowned.
 She—the Darling Child of Heaven
 Hastens hither;
 Does she bring a life-elixir
 With her?

No—the life is fading slowly
 From his face;
 Grave and marble melancholy
 Takes its place.

Ah! his eyes seem newly lighted;
 In a dream he sees
 Crimson sunsets—Orient gardens
 Fountains, thyme, and bees,
 Landscapes, lakes, and falling waters,
 Glades and bowers, and sparry caves;
 Isles that seem a part of Aden
 Sparkling o'er green Indian waves.

Once again his spirit rambles
 In its faërie dells ;
 Once again he hears thine accents,
 Queen of Spells !
 Comes a Vision of the Past,
 Like an angel to his soul ;
 Till it glitters—till it glows,
 Like a talismanic scroll.
 And the characters appear
 Sparkling, magical, and clear ;
 With a placid light they burn,
 Like the lamp within an urn,
 O'er the dead.
 The lines of beauty deeply traced
 By the amaranthine One,
 Still are fair and uneffaced,
 And they dazzle like the Sun,
 When he leapt
 To the bed,
 Where Cyrenè, newly won,
 Like a summer evening slept.
 Thoughts are flashing through his brain,
 Quick as falls the arrowy rain ;
 They are pleasure—they are pain,
 Like a sweet but plaintive strain.

 From his trance divine and deep,
 From his brief but blissful sleep,
 He awakes—alas ! to weep.

 Guardian angel, art thou here ?
 Ah ! methinks thou shouldst be near,
 Whispering solace in his ear.

Goethe.

Well I remember me that blessèd hour
When first the Muse descended down from heaven
Into my soul. It was a moonlit eve ;
I wandered by the silver-shining Mayn ;
The stars were in the skies ; a melody
Such as my heart never before conceived,
In its enraptured dreamings, floated round me
In the purpureal stillness. As I gazed
Deep into space with passionate eyes of hope,
A Vision moved before me :—not the star,
The golden-wingèd herald of the dawn,
Nor Cynthia, when she walks abroad at night,
Nor dewy Spring, nor Summer, when her smile
Gives life to opening flowers, and paints the meads
With roses lovely as the Pleiades,
Equalled the sunbright beauty of that shape.
Her cheeks, her brow, her majesty of mien,
The Amphionic sweetness of her smiles,
Her loosely-flowing tresses, falling free
Over a bosom bright as noonday clouds
When the sun fills them ; and her footsteps light
As summer winds, to fancy made her seem
Fairer than her whose golden glance of love
Stole from himself the impassioned youth of Troy.
She came—her coming was like morning light.
She moved—so moves the cygnet o'er the stream.
She spake—and Melody herself stood charmed.
There breathed a perfume from her rose-like lips
Sweeter than that which woos the passing winds
In Araby the blest, and courts their stay :
While her dark silken lashes curtained o'er

Eyes in whose softness all her soul broke forth,
 Whose look was language, and whose light was thought.
 Lightly she stood, and with a look more soft
 Than wreathèd flowers, sang a winning song,
 That passed into my soul, and dwells there still ;—
 Methinks I hear its eloquent echoes now.
 Nearer and nearer still, ye bright-eyed Shapes,
 Nearer and nearer still, I see ye come ;
 In heavenly dreamings wrap my visioned soul,
 And waft it on your pinions to the past.
 Bear me once more unto those purple hills
 And meadows vernal with the opening rose ;
 Where blooms the oak, the cypress, and the lime,
 The elm, the myrtle, and o'ershadowing plane,
 Whose curving branches kiss the emerald turf.
 There the bees sweetly hum around their hives,
 That breathe of honey and of summer flowers ;
 There sacred to the Nymphs and from their caves
 Murmur soft crystal fountains, and the birds
 Sing woodland songs of love ; the very shadows
 Seem softened sunshine, and the pine-trees shed
 Their nuts upon the sward beneath my feet.

Epitaph.

Who comes hither, lonely, lonely, lonely,
 Singing sweetly like a bird upon a ruin ?
 Gazing on him, only, only, only,
 Like a sunbeam lighting up a falling ruin ;
 Sad her smile, and stonely, stonely, stonely,
 She herself a fair and blasted ruin.

Epitaph.

'Tis Lucinda, the sweet Strasburgh maiden,
 Once the vernal sunshine of delight ;

But her soul, with madness deep o'erladen,
 Feels the bane of that accursèd blight.
 Stately, like the golden-sandalled Herè
 On snow-topt Olympus throned of old,
 So she shone—'tis past—and dim and weary
 Still she weeps for one grown icy-cold.

[*Phantom of LUCINDA passes.*

Voices.

Who is this with floating hair,
 Lustrous as the Morning Star
 When he fills the rosy air
 With the light of cinnabar?

Voices.

Lo! Emilia, pale Lucinda's sister,
 She is weeping too and veiled in sorrow;—
 Was not *one*, thou false heart, all sufficient?
 Why from twins in love thy pleasures borrow?
 Soul-incestuous, fickle, dark, deceitful,
 Let thy guilt upon thy spirit press,
 With the force and weight of black-winged thunder,
 On some bark o'er Ocean's wilderness!

[*Phantom of EMILIA passes.*

Voices.

Like the beaming daughter of the Sun,
 Flower-tressed Day with steps of music soft,
 Tripping o'er the rosy meads of heaven,
 When her father's star shines full aloft—
 Comes the young and sprightly virgin-beauty
 With her graceful flowing train;
 Ah! she stops—she pouts—and queenly feeling
 Lights her blushing face with high disdain.

[*Phantom of FREDERICA passes.*

Now she passes—yes—he merits all thy scorn ;
 Hearts like his could never mate with thine :
 Sooner shall the pure and heaven-born
 Mix with those of Satan's fated line.

Voices.

Even as the music of a fountain flowing
 From woodland rocks into some echoing well,
 On whose rich marge are fragrant flowers growing,
 The nymph-like rose and air-born asphodel,
 She comes—she moves—a child-like gleam of splendour
 Is round her—o'er her ; she alone, with one
 Whom the dim Shadowy Ones prepare to render
 Back to brief earth, were all he loved alone.
 Exquisite Lilli,—lo ! in all her brightness
 She stands before him, as in that fond scene
 So well remembered still when death enfolds him—
 Pure as the moonlight on some village green.

[*Phantom of LILLI passes.*

Voices.

Yet she fades into oblivion ;—
 Short and transient was the vision ;
 One is coming—*she* is coming,
 Gretchen, Gretchen comes from heaven ;
 Look !—he breathes again in wonder,
 Only *she* could rouse his spirit
 From the all-embracing torpor,
 Which, like brazen chains, clings round him.

[*A beautiful PHANTOM passes slowly and with saddened looks. Deep silence, and melancholy music. The SHADOWS retire.*

Goethe.

O Dreams! delicious Dreams! whence do ye come?
 Methinks I am a boy once more; methinks
 I see her now beside me in the sunshine,
 Or when the evening light is fading slowly
 Into the glimmering west, and the young moon,
 Whose youth and beauty are a type of Gretchen,
 Peeps through the deep blue sky, and one by one
 The stars—night's nymphs—come forth, and o'er the forest
 In the soft gloaming shimmer down upon us,
 As hand in hand we saunter through the trees,
 And in her ear I whisper fondest words.
 Hark!—hark!—methinks I hear a Spirit's voice
 Bring back that olden melody beloved;
 I sit once more within the accustomed bower,
 And look in those pure eyes that were my heaven.
 O exquisite echoes! what hath brought ye hither?

Mephistopheles.

Upon my life, a very handsome canticle!
 It quite exceeds the famous Song of Solomon,
 Who, in his flirting, heartlessness, and rhyming,
 Was somewhat aped by this our false and hollow one.
 But I grow tired. O raven-pinioned Woman!
 Earth-wandering, idling, sauntering Death! where art
 thou!
 I ne'er before so longed to see thy face.

Goethe.

Beautiful Gretchen! in an hour like this
 How sweet to wander by thy side, to clasp
 Thy folding hand in mine, to watch the glance,
 Chaster than light, that sparkles in thine eyes,

Or gaze enraptured on thee; while the wind,
Laden with breath of hyacinths, blows round
Thy musical footsteps, or, in merry mood,
Plays with the shining circlets of thine hair.
Speak to me—speak! oh! let me once more hear
The heavenly words that from thy lips distil
Like notes from some rare exquisite instrument
Of pearls and rubies made—speak to me, Gretchen,
And I will welcome death for the blest chance
That brought thee thus in fancy to my side.
Dost thou remember—can'st thou e'er forget
The night when first I saw thee—saw and loved
With a boy's sudden, fierce, immortal love?
Dost thou remember—can'st thou e'er forget
How my eyes fed on thee, and on thy face,
Like bees on nectar-welling flowers, while thou,
Handing the wine-cup round and tasting it,
Didst seem a heavenly Hebe? Never, never
Hath the scene faded from my passionate soul—
Nor thou, who art my worship, even to death.
Dost thou remember that bright evening, Gretchen,
When at the latticed window thou satst spinning,
And I confessed in burning words of love,
And poetry, and fear, my secret heart?
How my voice trembled! how my young limbs shook!
How my eyes filled with happy boyish tears!
How, when I pressed my face on thy fair hands,
I quivered, and my fond soul leapt to thine!

Here, at the casement window, with the vines
And roses interlaced, once more I sit
And see thee, Gretchen, while our friends laugh round
In gay companionship—thy distaff lying

Beside thy little liliated foot that plays
Unconsciously upon the sanded floor,—
Watching us with sweet gravity, I see thee.
Yet, while thou art familiar with us all,
Thou wilt not let thy best friend touch thy hand.
Even me—thy lover—when thou art beside me
Listening to some old fable of romance—
Or leaning on my shoulder as I write,
And looking o'er my book—thou wilt not grant
The liberty of fond and passionate glance,
Or gentle pressure of the hand or lip,
And thus we spend the hours in happy talk
And happy thoughts; night passes—we sit round
The cheerful fire and share the social meal,
Till one by one the guests drop off in sleep,
The mother slumbers in the great arm chair;
The strangers, travel-stained, are rapt in dream;—
While thou and I, talking in low fond tones,
Ward off the mists of drowsiness—anon
She leans her head upon my shoulder, blest
With the sweet burden while my arms embrace
Her nymph-like form—and when I wake 'tis day,
And Gretchen stands before the mirror tying
Over her starry hair her little cap;—
Lovelier than ever in my eyes she looks.
She presses both my hands in hers—we part—
And I steal home trembling and truant-like.

Room for the Coronation-pageant! room!
Frankfort pours out her smiling citizens
In holiday dress and courtier-like array.
The streaming sunshine clothes the streets in gold,
The double-eagle fountain pours forth wine,

The Marshals of the Empire on proud steeds,
 And mantled rich in aureate Spanish tire
 The Emperor in his robes—the King of Rome,
 The splendent train that follows in procession.

* * * *

'Tis moonlight—Gretchen hangs upon my arm,
 And through the dazzling streets of lamps and torches
 We wander on, and through the linden trees
 With pyramids of flame and spheres of light
 Fixed on transparent pedestals, and through
 A maze of glittering garlands flashing fire ;—
 Hours of Elysium ! ah, how soon ye pass !
 I stand beneath the casement once again,
 And look in Gretchen's eyes and press her hand.
 She prints one burning kiss upon my brows,
 A kiss whose magical seal is on them still,—
 The first and last—'tis o'er—she passes from me ;—
 Gretchen is gone—I never saw her more !

Phantom of GRETCHEN passes.

I tell thee that I loved her—she to me
 Was a whole world of light and happiness ;
 Her voice was like the music of my soul,
 Her eyes were as an angel's to my heart ;
 She was my dream, my thought, my life, my all ;
 I knew no joy that did not spring from her,
 I felt no sorrow that she did not lighten ;
 Her coming was like morning bathed in dew
 And scattering sunshine, and her absence was
 Night to my soul, which felt or knew no brightness
 When she was gone. I lived but for her smile ;

One glance of hers could raise me to high heaven,
 And one cold look press me beneath the earth.
 The soul that beamed from her sun-lighted eyes,
 Seemed but the heavenly twin of mine own soul ;
 And the celestial pureness of her mind,
 Whose virgin whiteness never knew a stain,
 Made me love virtue even for Gretchen's sake ;
 Heaven that had made her like itself, so made her
 That I might worship it in loving her :
 Like incense breathing from a precious censer,
 Or like the fragrance of a moss-twined rose,
 Or like new honey streaming from an oak,
 Her thoughts and words—O ever, ever loved,
 Where art thou now ? Methinks thou shouldst be here,
 Here, by thine early lover's dying pillow :
 Together we should pass from life, together
 Lie on one couch while the funereal strain
 Was sung o'er both ; together should our ashes
 Mix in one marble urn, beneath one tomb.

Can I forget thee ?—not an hour of life
 Hath seen my soul untenanted by thee,
 Or blotted from my memory the sense
 That thou and I were one, inseparate,
 Inseparable, as from planets light,
 From sunshine warmth, or fragrance from the rose.
 Can I forget thee ? Ours was love indeed ;
 No childish day-dream, but a life intense
 Witbin our hearts ; we spake not of our love,
 But in our mutual silence it was felt,
 In the intense absorbing happiness
 Of mutual long, long looks, as if our souls

Held sweet communion through our passionate eyes.
 Can I forget thee? All I see around
 Reminds me of thee—the clear silvery stream—
 The fresh wild thyme—the silent starry night—
 A tree—a ruined tower—a grassy knoll—
 Like those of old, in scenes where thou and I
 Were once together in our loving time,
 Can call thine image ever to my soul.
 Gretchen! where art thou? Come, my soul awaits thee;
 It cannot wing its flight from earth alone.—
 Oh, how thou'lt weep when thou shalt know I'm dead!

Mephistopheles.

The Gods themselves were drunk or silly
 When they soused into fooling with women of earth;—
 I'd rather be whipped from Cologne to Chili,
 Than afford such a feast for the Cherubim's mirth:
 I would rather bury a wife than marry one;
 I'd much sooner bed with a serpent or bear;
 The most certain bother on earth to harry one
 Is one of those darlings with golden hair.

Hermes.

You're certainly right when you talk of ladies
 In the way you do, my most excellent cozen:
 The gods must have hoped to make a Hades
 Of Earth when they made them.

Mephistopheles.

Thrice ten dozen
 Myriads of blessings be theirs for doing it;
 Blessings for making an Eve for Adam.

In pure love of mischief, and zeal in pursuing it,
Shew me an equal for Miss or Madam.

Hermes.

But for the sex, Earth would still be Aden.

Mephistopheles.

Wonder not therefore that *I* defend them :
From the dry grandmother to the soft maiden,
Still may my warmest wishes attend them.
But, sir, the matter that most disgusts me
Is to see *men* like this man here dying,
Puling and puking, groaning and sighing,
Like a trout on a gridiron frying,
Or a big lubberly schoolboy crying,
A 'prentice girl thus glorifying,
Of beauties she never had, prating and lying,
Her very small virtues still magnifying,
And that when they're scarcely worth denying ;
That's the matter that most disgusts me.
Were I a man, do you think you'd find me
For a sly milliner whimpering thus ?
Sooner my master and yours should bind me
By the tail to frosty Caucasus.

Goethe.

She is dead !—she is dead !—
With a stone at her feet and a stone at her head,
She lies in the cold, cold grave ;
While I weep, and wander, and rave.
Ah, me ! ah, me !
The blossoms are bright on flower and tree ;—

The lilies and roses come and go ;
 The floral beauty of May and June
 Fades away like the gentle moon ;
 Their short-lived brightness flies !
 But summer comes with her sunny eyes ;
 She breathes !—she laughs o'er their graves, I trow,
 And the fair young flowers, like wood-nymphs, rise ;
 They shine once more
 With the light of days of yore.
 But we—the lords of the earth—ah, me !
 And, oh ! good God, that such things should be !
 Die, and die for eternity.

We rise no more from the silent tomb,
 We sit in icy darkness and gloom,
 And the holy priests, they say :

* * * * *

O ! thou errant flickering beam
 Of sunshine, bathe me in thy stream
 Of warmth and beauty, love and light,
 For, ah !—my soul is black as night.

* * * * *

Unto thine ear I will unfold
 The records of a wild and old
 Mysterious tale of love and death,
 And tears and sighs that choke the breath.

* * * * *

When I was a lonely wanderer
 My heart was in the silent wood ;
 I loved to muse by the mountain stream
 Bathed in the sunshine's heavenly flood.

* * * * *

Gretchen was like a beautiful Thought

In a Poet's fancy wrought ;
 Wild and sweet her gentle voice,
 And like a magic spell it came
 Through my faint and fainting frame,
 In even to the innermost soul
 I could feel its music roll.

* * * * *

At thy divine, all-powerful call
 Memory leaps from her dædal hall
 Of mind, and straight before me brings
 The days—the old long summer days
 Of sunshine, love, and flowers, and lays,
 And wandering walks by rippling brooks,
 And faltering words, and genial looks,
 And tones of music, and the lute's
 Low whispered musical voice which shoots
 Down through my being's deepest springs.

* * * * *

The primrose paths, where Youth and Pleasure
 Gaily dance to music's measure ;
 The murmur of wild mountain bees
 Around the fragrant young rose-trees,
 When summer-showers of sun and dew
 Have drenched the rose-buds through and through ;
 And the young choir of laughing hours
 Upon my road shed loveliest flowers.

* * * * *

And slow and sad the fair-haired Maid
 Paced the well-known greenwood glade,
 Her voice had grown a winter wind
 That moans at night through some old pile
 Of mouldering towers with ivy twined ;

And, oh!—her sweet and sorrowing smile,
 So cold and yet so purely bright,
 Was like the moon's on graves at night ;
 A glad face o'er a heart of woe—
 Beauty above and death below.

* * * * *

The forest swung beneath the blast,
 The crashing trees fell fast and fast,
 And to my soul there came a Dream ;
 I knew her tall and shadowy shape,
 Bright and thin as the moon's beam.
 And then she spake such words to me
 As cling like fire to memory,
 And gently blamed my marble pride ;
 And then

* * * * *

The winds on coal-black wings they came,
 And they flashed from their eyes the lightning's flame ;
 They came like terrible desert steeds,
 They wrapt in the folds of their monstrous wings
 The giant-snouted cliffs, that seemed
 To bend beneath them like young reeds.
 They shrouded the sky, and they blackened the sun ;
 O frowning winds ! are ye spirits of hell ?
 Ye flash from your hearts an unearthly fire,
 And now ye clash with a dreadful roaring.

* * * * *

His brow was garlanded with flowers
 More bright than ever bloomed on earth,
 Through which the sportive zephyr wandered,
 And all around its fragrance squandered ;
 While a low voice

* * * * *

Ah, well-a-day !
Cold, and dead, and cold,
She lies in the frigid fold
Of the horrible serpent, Death.
She sucked his poisoned breath,
Till the rose on her cheek that gleamed,
Like a withering lily seemed.
Her silver laughter, her smiling eyes,
The music of her words,
Sweet as a singing bird's,
On the merry greenwood tree,
Live but in memory ;
For, oh ! my own dear love is dead,
And in her coffin cold she lies,
Shrouded in white from foot to head,
While over her grave the grass doth grow.
Ah ! whither hath her spirit fled ?
That spirit as white as snow.
Is it in heaven, or in the sky ?
Or in the grave where my love doth lie ?
Oh, no—sweet Heaven !—no.
Her beautiful spirit is here in my heart,
Never—never—never to part ;
It came to my heart in the hour she died,
Over the mountains broad and wide,
Over the land and over the tide,
And my soul knew then that my love was dead,
And welcomed the angel-guest love-led ;
And deep in my soul *her* spirit dwells,
Like a lily embowered in its woodland dells.
Hast thou not seen the evening star
Shining from its blue home afar,

Down on the breast of a mountain lake
 When the winds their slumbers take ?
 Fixed and still its beam appears ;
 Even so, from the stellar spheres,
 And the halls of heaven ordained for her,
 She came like a wingèd wanderer,
 Into her own true lover's breast,
 And there my love hath built her nest.
 Ah ! well-a-day !—well-a-day !—
 That *thou* shouldst lie in the cold black clay !
 What is the sunshine of heaven to me ?
 I feel not its heat, nor its beauty see ;
 Or if—then I pause and weep the while
 For the death of thy soft and sun-bright smile.
 Ah, well-a-day !
 My heart is broken for ever and aye.

Hermes.

Is this raving moonstruck madness ?
 Is this love not feignèd woe ?

Mephistopheles.

Yes, in truth and sober sadness ;
 Now he feels it, now he owns it,
 When his tide of life runs low.
 Pride and folly, love unholy,
 Ruled him ever until now ;
 Is he not a gallant lover ?

Hermes.

Gallant ! no ; a brute I vow.
 Why, my cousin, did he never

Use the very least endeavour
 In his pomp of days to find her,
 If he really loved her so ?

Mephistopheles.

Because, my excellent sage soul-driver,
 The rascal didn't intend to wive her ;
 And to anything else she'd have thundered, No.

Hermes.

And what is the reason that now, when dying,
 And life like the dream of a shadow is flying
 For ever, his soul is still testifying
 The passionate love that it bore for her ?

Mephistopheles.

Because though in heart he loved her dearly,
 Yet coldness and vanity touched him more nearly ;
 Never but once did he feel sincerely,
 And that was for Gretchen—you're answered, Sir.

Goethe.

The hour is come that will not be deferred ;
 The ravening bloodhound Doom is on my path,
 I feel his hot fierce breath, and fain would court
 The gentle dews of slumber, but they come not ;
 Nor will they till eternal sleep enfolds me,
 And life has passed like a dull acted play
 That leaves no thought of gladness or content ;
 Even such as mine, alas ! too long has been.
 O Nature ! give me back my youth once more.

Is, then, the World to which I fly a World

Of souls, or do we perish in the instant
 Life quits the body? No; some instinct tells me
 Our minds are then expanded to perfection;
 They can see farther into the dim past,
 They can think farther into the wide future,
 Than we can here imagine; free from all
 The uneven combinations of gross matter
 With fire ethereal that on earth confound it,
 Making it now a god and now a beast;
 So 'twill be likewise then, exempt from all
 The evil changes which it here endures,
 That tell it it is linked to earthly stuff,
 And make it pant to burst its prison-house.

Time's coursers, meteor-maned and fiery-footed,
 And lashed by spirits invisible, hurry on
 The light car of our destiny; all that we
 Can do is to hold the reins with hand unflinching,
 And guide the hasty wheels, now here, now there,
 Shunning the mounds or rocks that cross our path:
 We know not whither we hurry. Who can tell?
 We know not whence we started, or for what?
 And lo! behold, the Ethereal Steeds are here,
 Waving their snowy wings of heavenly birth.

Epitaph.

Vanish! vanish! Sprites and Daimons!
 Water-wolves give over howling!
 Now the dark-winged One is coming
 Like an infant's dream from Aden;
 Lo!—her presence is as moonbeams,
 Or the sapphire eyes of day-light

When they greet the heaving ocean.
 See—the blue-eyed One approaches,
 Gently, softly, like a planet
 Sailing through the boundless heavens.
 Silence, beauty, love, are round her,
 Like the morning which Aurora
 Scatters from her rosy tresses—
 Vanish ! hence !—it is commanded.

A Voice.

Whither hath the Guardian Angel
 Of this mortal lone departed ?

Mephistopheles.

Ha !—ha !—ha !—a silly question ;
 Why she's almost broken-hearted.
 Half an hour ago, or better,
 Up the chimney flue she flitted,
 Weeping sadly, very sadly,
 Something like a swan when dying,
 If one may believe the poets.
 Ah !—poor thing, she's to be pited ;
 Even I was almost crying,
 When I heard this mortal's follies,
 In such moving rhymes bedittied.

The SPIRIT OF DEATH entering silently, becomes visible to

GOETHE.

Goethe.

Beautiful Spirit, whom I see beside me,
 A rainbow rising from an ocean stream,

With thy blue eyes like childhood's violet eyes,
And look that seems to wake within my soul
A lonely, dream-like feeling of delight,
A paradise of mystical loveliness——
Whence hast thou come on flower-like pinions hither?
From what rapt solitude and invisible home
Of winds, whose voices are wild harmonies;
Of stars, whose beauty is but as the picture
Of thine own spirit radiant ever with love?
Art thou of God? Or hath thine essence flowed
From the dark source of Him whose fate forlorn
The Ancient Prophets sang in mournful dirge;
That Son of God, beauteous but sin-begrimed?
Have I not seen thee in my slumbering hours?
Thy look, and eloquent gesture, and mild eyes
Seem all familiar to me, and I gaze
Upon thee as I would on one whom I
Had loved from early childhood as a friend.
If thou canst speak, and if my mortal ears
Can drink in thine immortal words, oh, speak!
And I will listen to thy voice as once
I do remember me I used to listen,
Wandering in childhood by the lonely streams,
To the soft whispers of the silver waves,
Until I found in every note that breathed
From broken billows on the strand a tone
That seemed to find an answer in my soul.
A moonlike splendour floats around thy form
Like the pure dreams of heaven that fill my thoughts
When musing on Eternity and Space.
My tablets! quick! my tablets! I would write.
The pictures passing o'er my mind's clear mirror

Deserve eternal memory—quick ! my tablets !

O Light, where art thou ? Light ! Darkness, avaunt ?
Open the shutters, and let in more light !

Art thou the Spirit of the Spring come hither ?
Oh, then I'll welcome thee, celestial Spring !
My spirit drinks new life from Spring's approach.
My tablets !—quick ! my tablets ! I would write.
More light, I say !—Darkness, what dost thou here ?

And yet methinks, fair Shape, thou art not Spring.
The beautiful flowers that enwreath thy brows
Are faded all, and in thy gentle smile
There's more of sadness than of vernal mirth.
And the still dazzling light of thy blue eyes
Is not the light of life, nor tells of aught
That appertains to sunshine-bringing Spring.
Pale Splendour ?—calm and ghostlike Presence !—proud
And mighty as a Queen, but statelier far
Than any majesty that ever trod
Upon our earth, answer me ; speak ! oh, speak !

Spirit of Death.

Goethe !

Goethe.

I hear thee ; what wouldst thou with me ?

Spirit of Death.

I see no Guardian Angel standing near thee,
But one dark Shape, and One who should be here,
The heavenly Messenger of Gods and men.

Goethe.

I know not who is here, I see not any,
But thee, all-shining and Celestial Spirit.

Mephistopheles.

His Guardian Angel hath since left him,
Such creatures are not to be found at court ;
The fate that sent him to Weimar bereft him
Of her, which afforded us wonderful sport.
For seventy years he has served King Mammon,
And neglected poor penniless Lady Truth ;
So I bear a warrant from Jupiter Ammon
To bring him away, for he loves the youth.

Spirit of Death.

I grieve to hear it ; but the hour is come
When we must render up his soul to Death.
Goethe !

Goethe.

Fair Spirit, what wouldst thou with me ?

Spirit of Death.

Twice have I called thee. When I call again
Thy soul must leave thy body. Art thou ready ?

Mephistopheles.

Rather a useless question ; whether ready
Or whether not, there's no refusing *you* ;
Certes his thoughts must have been most unsteady,
If he's not well prepared at eighty-two.

Hermes.

Come—we've been waiting long enough ; despatch him.
Hark ! the clock tells eleven—it is told.

Mephistopheles.

You see me, Madam, quite prepared to catch him,
And shield him from the slightest draft of cold.

*Hymn of a SPIRIT faintly borne on the echoes from farthest
Heaven : soft and plaintive Harp-music.*

Lord have mercy, Lord receive him
In the mansions of thy blest ;
Cleanse the stains of sin that grieve him,
Till thy light illumines his breast.

Allalulia !

From thy throne sublime of splendours,
Reared on suns divine, look down
On thy servant, who surrenders
Life, yet fears thine awful frown.

Allalulia !

Goethe.

*Fœdè hunc mundum intravi—anxius vixi.
Perturbatus egredior, Causa Causarum miserere mei.*

Mephistopheles.

These were the last sad words of Aristotle,
Except that they were spoken in good Greek ;
Were I a man, and dying, what I'd seek
Would be a flask of wine, or brandy bottle,

Like a bold English thief at Tyburn tree :
Such gay contempt of death more taketh me,
Than the last horrible howlings of the pious,
From Doctor Johnson back to Ananias.

Spirit of Death.

Goethe !

Goethe.

I come.

Dies. SPIRIT *vanishes.*

Hermes.

At last I have his lordship.
Baron von Humbug, you are truly welcome.

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SCENE VI.

THE WORLD OF FAERIE.

Nisses.

Weep, weep for the fallen Spirit,
 Who bowed the beauty of clay ;
 Who, destined to soar through the splendours of heaven
 Crouched down like a worm in the way.

Recks.

Woe, woe, for the erring Spirit ;
 Our gold harps are tuned unto woe ;
 From our emerald caves in the foaming waves
 We weep, while the sad winds blow.

The Tylwith Teg.

Weep, lonely hills ; lament, enchanted waters,
 Break into tears upon the silent shore ;
 Tell to our bright-eyed sister, wives, and daughters,
 The Heaven-souled is no more.
 Oh, were it ours to bear thee, and enthrone thee,
 Chief in the diamond halls and emerald domes,
 Far in the Cymric mountains, 'midst the gardens,
 Fruits, flowers, and music of our raptured homes.

Fairies.

We rode through the air on our fleet white steeds,
 While music, and light, and song,
 Shed flower-sweet dews of beauty around
 The least of our gleesome throng.

But the Angel's sorrowful, saddening strain,
 Smote us in full career ;
 And its tone of wild reproach and pain
 Still rings in each heart and ear.

Turley-Hymn.

Lament, lament, shape-haunted towers that crown
 The bacchant Rhine ;
 Lament, lament, grey clouds that wistly frown
 Over its dells divine,
 Of Undine, Sprite, and Fay ;
 The saddening sunset of so fair a day.

Morgue la faye.

O Avalon ! fair Avalon ;
 Thy lodestar walls and vales of light,
 That gleam for ever, pure and bright,
 Since Enoch and Elias shone
 Within thy towers, fair Avalon ;
 Gladly to thee I would have borne
 Upon the wings of dove-eyed morn
 The prophet-soul, fair Avalon.
 The hour is past, my tears are vain,
 I dare not, if I would, complain.
 Ah me, my hopes are dead and gone,
 O Avalon, fair Avalon.

Elve Kings.

Over the sea, in our black-horsed chariots,
 Trampling in spray its foaming billows,
 Terrible Elve Kings whirl like lightning
 Into our forests of living elder ;

Summon our soldiers changed by faërie,—
Follow the Demon who enthrals him.

Reprechauns.

On from fair-hilled, pleasant Ireland,
Grassy lawns, and lakes of foliage,
Sacred mountains, warbling valleys,
Hasten to the Minstrel's grave.
Breathe the hymn of spotless sorrow
Over him whose stately harp-strings
Sang the fallen Queen of Kingdoms,
Prostrate, trampled, chained,—a slave.

Teus.

Soul of the Poet ! art thou then departed ?
Would I were near to shroud thee in my mantle,
Ere unto darkness and its monsters hurled.

Bride of Corinth.

From tottering fanes, and woods of olive,
That sleep beneath the gentle moon ;
And from the wimpling waves of Corinth,
That softly hymn like sweet kanoon ;
The Bride of ancient rhyme and fable
Floats through the breathless air in tears ;
Flings o'er thy pall and mouldering grandeur
Fair faded flowers—and disappears.

Fate.

From Demogorgon's palaces of wonder,
Deep in the Indian mountains, we have flown,
Drawn by the wild and melancholy moan

Chanted by angels, till the rocks asunder,
 And the deep ocean chasms, were cleft in twain ;
 We come, alas ! to find our flight was vain ;
 The Olympic-souled is gone ; the sun is set,
 The earth with heaven's dearest showers is wet ;
 O Soul ! O Sun ! O Might ! alas ! alas !
 Thy life is done.

Fadas.

The golden fountains of his being dried,
 The fiat passed—the Ancient Minstrel died ;
 Did good preponderate, or evil deed ?
 What the ripe fruits from such a mighty seed ?
 Only is known unto The One above,
 Who tempers justice with unbounded love.

Mazikcen.

Weep not, oh, weep not the immortal parted,
 Truth will redeem him in the fitting moment ?
 For lives liúe his are twain, the outer and inner ;
 Not by the first, but by the last God judges.

Elle-Maidens.

The mountain-rushing winds, they sweep
 Along the swanlike sea ;
 The sea-nymphs o'er the sounding deep
 Wake lonely minstrelsy.
 Away—away to join the choirs
 Of silver-glancing light,
 Beneath the Moon, whose vestal fires
 Invoke the elfin rite.

Rusalki.

Hearken, sweet sisters, 'tis the voice of death
Wandering in sighs upon the lonely heath ;
Away, away to yonder sparkling rills,
Melting in music from the azure hills,
And chant a chorus full of strange, sad woe,
Over the light-eclipsed that sleeps below.

Cluricanns.

In faith it were better to sing to the streams
Than to listen to screams,
Or bother our beautiful noddles with dreams.
The arrow is sped, and the Minstrel is dead ;
Then away to our own island lakes,
And list to the song of the thrush in the brakes,
Who melody wakes,
When the cold chain of silence hangs o'er
The fair Child of Genius no more.

SCENE VII.

THE MARKET-PLACE AT WEIMAR.

TOWNSMAN *and* COUNTRYMAN *meeting.*

Townsmán.

Good morrow, neighbour! any news to-day?
How go the crops, and how is Madam Plitt?

Countryman.

The crops are middling, and my wife is well;
The only news that stirs is, *he* is dead.

Townsmán.

What, dead at last! he lived a merry time;
I do remember him these forty years,
A pleasant gentleman, who loved to have
His will above all things; I'm sorry for him;
His name brought many to our town who never
Would have come here to spend their English gold
Had he not lived among us. 'Tis a loss
To be lamented. We shall see no more
Those everlasting Wandering Jews; I mean,
The travelling English, who're so rich, 'tis said
They eat bank-notes for dinner, and would drink
For breakfast molten guineas, if their throats
And lard-lined stomachs could endure the draught.
Certes, I'm very sorry that he's dead.

Countryman.

And so am I ; the visitors were rare
 And generous customers, flinging cash like chaff
 Among us farmers ; paying us for eggs,
 Cheese, cream, and butter, fifty times as much
 As the Grand Duke gives in his happiest moods.
 'Tis a great loss to all the world indeed.

Townsmen.

Not that the man himself was much to speak of ;
 He never gave a pfennig, I'll be bound,
 To any man that wanted it.

Countryman.

Gadzooks !

And so he never did ; he talked most finely,
 As I've been told ; but deeds, not words, for me.

Townsmen.

And how is Jack, and Martin, and small Fritz ?
 Come, shall we have a bottle of brown beer ?
 When will they bury him ? We'll see the show.
 The beer they bottle here is excellent.

Ballad-Singer.

A choice new song of Cupid.—Buy, sirs, buy.

Sings.

A fair lady once with her young lover walked,

Gillyflower, gentle rosemary ;

Through a garden, and sweetly they laughed and they
 talked,

While the dews fell over the mulberry-tree.

She gave him a rose—while he sighed for a kiss,

Gillyflower, gentle rosemary ;

Quoth he, as he took it, “ I kiss thee in this,”

While the dews fall over the mulberry-tree.

She gave him a lily less white than her breast,

Gillyflower, gentle rosemary ;

Quoth he, “ ’Twill remind me of one I love best ;

While the dews fall over the mulberry-tree.

She gave him a two faces under a hood,

Gillyflower, gentle rosemary ;

“ How blest you could make me,” quoth he, “ if you
would,”

While the dews fall over the mulberry-tree.

She saw a forget-me-not flower in the grass,

Gillyflower, gentle rosemary ;

Ah ! why did the lady that little flower pass ?

While the dews fall over the mulberry-tree.

The young lover saw that she passed it, and sighed,

Gillyflower, gentle rosemary ;

They say his heart is broke, and he certainly died.

While the dews fall over the mulberry-tree.

Now all you fair ladies, take warning by this,

Gillyflower, gentle rosemary ;

And never refuse your young lovers a kiss,

While the dews fall over the mulberry-tree.

Countryman.

All Europe, Asia, Africa, America,
 And Australasia, will lament his death.—
 Come, let's make merry o'er our cakes and beer.

Eckermann.

So—he is dead, the glory of the world,
 The light of genius, and the heart of hearts ;
 Whose presence was as sunlight on the earth ;—
 One of the race of Giants, whose existence
 Ennobles man, and brings him near the Gods,
 Or the high spirits who are God's own sons.

Have I then looked my last upon those eyes,
 And on that form sublime, whose living flame
 Even as I speak, hath joined the glorious band,
 Byron and Schiller, Tasso and Voltaire ?
 'Tis but twelve days since last we met and talked :
 How vividly I remember now his words !
 We spake of God, and Jesus named the Christ ;
*If I am asked, he said, whether it be
 Part of my nature to pay Jesus reverence,
 I answer, Yea, I bow myself before him
 As a most perfect symbol of the Pure ;
 As a most holy manifestation shewn
 In man to man of Him who is the Beautiful.
 So I revere the Sun, which is a type
 Of the Most High in splendour and beneficence,
 By whose creating light we live and breathe.
 But if you say to me : Bow down before*

*A thumb-bone of the apostles Peter and Paul,
I cry, Stand off with your absurdities !*

Thus did he leave his thoughts of light on earth,
Hourly, that all might learn through him the light ;
Where shall man seek it, now that he is dead ?

Can I describe the sorrow of my soul,
When first I heard he had departed ? Never,
Shall the sad memory of that lonely hour
Leave me, but still exists within my spirit,
Even as his image dwells in my mind's eye.
Scarcely hath passed an hour since I beheld him ;
An irresistible desire impelled me
To look once more upon his earthly form,
Ere the grave wrapped it in enduring night.
I sought the chamber where he lay in death ;
He seemed as if asleep ; repose and peace
Lay like an heavenly light upon the features
Of that sublime and heroic countenance :
The mighty brow seemed yet to harbour thought.
I drew aside the sheet in which he lay ;—
Gods ! what divine magnificence of form
Crowned every limb with beauty. The broad breast
Arched into grandeur ; the full muscular limbs
Rounded like marble by some hand inspired
With heavenly fire. Before me still as night
He lay, a perfect man, like the past heroes
Of the Homeric age. A rapture passed
Over my soul, as reverently I looked
And half forgot that the immortal spirit
Had left its earthly tenement. I laid
My hand upon his breast, but it was ice,

Solemnly silent as an ancient statue.
 I turned away, and let my tears flow free.
 O Goethe! thou art gone : be all thine errors
 Forgotten in the grave wherein they lay thee :
 And only be remembered thine example
 Of aspirations after light and truth ;
 Of lofty fancies, commune with the heavens ;
 Of practical wisdom, and devoted love
 After that knowledge which lifts man to God !

*Drinking Song of the Villagers, merry-making
 and carousing in the Inn.*

Fill, fill all your glasses !
 Pass the light liquid around ;
 In the depths of the foaming cup,
 The pearls of true pleasure are founed ;
 Ne'er on a meeting like this
 Gloom or his minions frowned.

As the broad ocean sparkles,
 When the beams of the west,
 Like orient jewels of light,
 On his blue bosom rest,
 So wine—sunny wine,
 Brightens, and cheers up the breast.

See—see ! how it blushes !
 Like a Nymph whose fond face glows
 With a purple light, when Pan
 Wakes her from sweet repose :
 Or the golden Venus of old .
 When from the billows she rose.

A clapping and clinking of glasses heard.

SCENE VIII.

THE AIR.

Chorus.

Mount with me the Golden Steeds,
Soaring high on wings of splendour
Over sunbright seas and knolls,
And the whitely-foaming main,
And the dewy plains whose flowers
Glistens far from beauteous trees ;
Through Bavaria rich in wine,
Cattle, wheat, and pastures broad,
See the Three like meteors pass,
Fleeter than the car of triumph
Drawn by terror-snorting coursers :
Lightning clothes their rushing wings,
And the eagles scream in horror :
And the elements deep roaring,
Fire and Air and Water tremble,
And the thunder-wielding Spirits
Lowly kneel before the Imp
Cloven-footed and cock-feathered :
And the solemn stars grow dark.—
Now they pass the mountain vineyards,
And the gentle hymning waters ;
And the Austrian plains below,
Emerald, brown, and red are seen ;
And the palaces and towers,
Churches, prisons, convents, forts :
Woe is me ! woe is me !

They are wending, fleetly wending,
To the dark and dread Abyss,
There to sit in night unending—
Onward, onward, Magic Steeds !
Through the blest ambrosial heaven,
While the dews of song and music
Bathe my brows and throbbing temples,—
Flashes by a thunderbolt,
Followed quick by cloud on cloud,
Black and horrid, gorged with night.
Hark ! the merry oaten pipe
Mounting upward with the songs
Of the lark from yonder lawns,
And the breathing fields enchant me
With the perfume that ascends.
See—below, the vine-clad hills,
Haunts beloved of sylvan Pan,
And the ocean fair and faithless
As its child fair Aphroditè.
Yonder woodlands crowned with oaks,
Yonder gardens swarming thick
In the May with humming bees,
And the fountains, firs, and poplars,
Valleys, glens, and heathery mountains
Of the Styrian please me well ;
Fleecy herds and pastoral swains,
Goats milk-dropping, sheep and kine.
Onward still, my Steeds of wonder !
Woe is me ! woe is me !
They are wending, fleetly wending,
To the dark and drear Abyss,
There to sit in gloom unending.

Lo !— the hoarsely-dashing Danube ;
Hungary is now beneath us,
Beauteous as a heavenly Muse
With immortal fillets crowned ;
Lovely child of shame and sorrow,
Where are thy great lion-souled ?
Roses sweeter than the breath
Of Cytherè waft their fragrance
Upward through the amber air.
Grass grows on its streets and towers,
Desolation sits upon them.
Curses seize ye, bloody vultures !
Leagued against the graceful fawn.
Trident-bearer, sitt'st thou moveless ?
As a thunder blasted oak,
May the fire of heaven fell ye,
Till ye totter headlong, hellward.
We have passed the Servian limits ;
Turbanned Turkey smiles beneath,
Fair as some eye-mocking Seiren
Warbling to her ivory flute ;
And its spicy odours mount
The thin atmosphere around.
Lo ! the land renowned for horses,
Land of Crescent, star, and cypress !
Once thy soul burst like a war-steed
Fiercely to the battle-field ;
Now art thou a lordly lion
Tortured by a feeble kid.
Death and Terror float beside me,
And the Fates in mighty dance,
And my steeds, like wild sea-monsters,

Rush along the sounding air.
Whither, whither, are they flying?
Whither bend the meteor-Three?
They are wending, fleetly wending,
To the dark and dead Abyss,
There to sit in chains unending.
Woe is me! woe is me!
As a cork is tossed and tossed
On the boiling water's rage,
So the fiery mist, cloud, thunder,
Flame, and tempest, hurl me fiercely
Through the elemental strife.
Onward, on, my panting Steeds!
Onward through the howling heavens
Now we pass the marble ocean,
Margined with steep hills and castles,
War's red dogs no more unleashed,
Rave and roar upon thy shores;
Discord hides her bloody brand,
Murder doffs her robe of gore,
Havoc veils her crest of pride,
See the mountains lift their helms,
Dazzling sight with gleaming snow:
We are o'er the Asian realms,
Far and wide they stretch below;
O thou lark, wild-singing lark!
Cloudland hermit pouring songs
To thy god, what dost thou here?
Would'st thou reach the starry ramp:
Of the heaven? Fare thee well;
Thou art mounting still, and mounti
High o'er earth sweet chanting lark;

We are o'er Armenia's plains,
And the stellar-mantled rainbow,
Flashing far unnumbered splendours,
Spans the whirling orb beneath.
Rainbow, rainbow, take me heavenward,
Let me mount thy glittering arch,
And fly upward to the Sun.
Mist enclouds it—it is swallowed
Up in darkness, even as youth
By the monster jaws of Orcus.
Onwards, on my Magic Steeds,
After these the meteor-Three.
A—they stop—they stay—they veil
In thick mist their shining brows ;
Woe is me ! woe is me !
They are wending, fleetly wending,
To the black and cursed Abyss,
There to sit in fire unending,
Woe is me ! woe is me !
Who are these ? infernal phantoms ;
Tortured spirits sent from hell ?
Ah ! what do they ? whom await they ?
Is this, then, the Sacred Mountain
Ararat ?—the Mount of Noè ?
Rest ye here, my sunbright Coursers,
Ye have better borne me hither
Than a witch's greasy broomstick,
Than the Dædalæan pinions,
Or the fabled golden arrow.

SCENE IX.

MOUNT ARARAT.

*ABADDON and the LOCUSTS.**Abaddon.*

HILLIHO ! hilliho !

Lo, the hour of noon approaches,
 When Squire Voland folds his cattle
 In the caves immense of Hades.

Hilliho ! hilliho ?

Mighty Locusts, ye who go
 Without ceasing to and fro
 O'er the wrinkled, blood-besprinkled,
 Bread-and-butter-bard-betinkled,
 Rusty, musty, fusty, dusty,
 Face and form of Madam T'erra.

Hilliho !

Hilliho !

Man-faced, horse-shaped, woman-haired,
 Lion-toothed, and scorpion-tailed,
 Golden-crowned, sharp-stinging, winging,
 Iron-breasted, smoke-spawned Locusts !

Hilliho !

Hilliho !

East, and West, and North, and South.

Hilliho !

On this mystic spot your monarch

Takes his daily stand, awaiting
 The due muster of his forces,
 With the souls that bear imprinted
 Satan's seal upon their foreheads.

Hilliho !

Hilliho !

Bring them hither, high and low.
 In five minutes more the trumpet
 Of the Hours will noon proclaim ;
 In five minutes more Sir Voland
 Will be here in mist and flame ;
 Cursing, swearing, shouting, fuming,
 Million oaths from hell exhuming,
 If he misses one of mine,
 Absent without leave or license.
 Trust me, ere his lordship hies hence,
 He will have him dragged before him,
 Though ten thousand clouds hung o'er him ;
 And will bang the hapless creature,
 Body, bone, limb, tail, and feature,
 Into softest gelatine.

Hilliho ! high and low,

To the Devil's raree-show !

Ha ! Ha ! Ha !—at last they're rushing
 Hither on their outspread pinions,
 Bearing huge distended budgets,
 Filled with slaves for our dominions.
 Dark Amaymon from the orient,
 Corson from the sunny south ;
 Zimmimar, the north's dread angel,
 Cheleb, ruler of the west ;
 Deber, tempter fierce of night ;

Gyap, tempter dark of day ;
 Bringing here in God's despite,
 Adam's race—hell's hapless prey.
 Hilliho !
 Hilliho !
 Sitra-el, Malanthon, welcome !
 Sagrigit, Sitrami, hail !
 Thama-oz, Falaor, Satur,
 Never knew I ye to fail.
 Noble Locusts ! hasten, hasten ;
 Bring your burthens quickly—so ;
 Styx be thanked, the rest are coming,
 From all quarters—hilliho !

Sitrael.

Here's one whose religious maxim
 You may read upon his wine-bag,
Sine Venere et Baccho
Friget vita.

Malanthon.

Here's another,
 Paunched like holy Father Luther.

Sagrigit.

Here's a renegade Franciscan,
 With his spectacles on nose,
 And with Judas-coloured eyes,
 And with heart more black than Styx,
 And with tongue more false than hell,
 And with smile more foul than Cain's,
 And with form more base than toad's,

Father Frank Sylvester Proteus,
 Full of tricks and lewd grimaces,
 As a monkey when he's wooing ;
 He was once an authorling,
 Till his papers grew so fœcal,
 Not a decent butter-seller,
 Ragman, or tobacco-vender,
 Would disgrace himself by buying
 Them for wrapping up his ha'porths.

Sitrami.

Here's a crowd, all tongue, no brains,—
 France's most admired riff-raff.

Tyamaoz.

Here's a mighty lord of Spain's
 Best noblesse, but worthless chaff.

Satur.

Here's a miser, a monk, a blasphemer, all drunk,
 A black-bearded dragoon and a Cadi ;
 Here's a patriot quite willing to sell for one shilling,
 His soul to my lord or my lady.

Ycalpharez.

Here's a big-bellied friar, a scarlet-faced liar,
 A shrew, and a parliament member ;
 A justice of peace, who, for turkeys and geese,
 Did injustice from March to December.

Tymok.

Here are Kalmucks from Ural, who robbed in the plural,

And prayed in the singular number ;
 Here's a tinker, a tailor, a duke, and a sailor,
 Who tumbled dead drunk in the Humber.

Jimra.

Here are judges in ermine, and breeders of vermin,
 False witnesses, thieves, and field-preachers ;
 Ten swindling stock-brokers, a score of dull jokers,
 And dandies with paint on their features.

Hipplejethy.

Here are mollahs from Turkey, with faces all murky,
 And beards full as black as their vices ;
 Here are tea-table tabbies, and six Hebrew Rabbis,
 Who need to be wrapped up in spices.

Surot-Benothy.

Here's a gambler, a bully, a surgeon, a cully,
 A lawyer, a hangman, a Brahmin ;
 A critic, a juggler, a quean, and a smuggler,
 And one who grew rich by a famine.

Barma.

Here's a merchant from Holland, a pretty French doll, and
 A blubber-fed beauty from Iceland,
 A princess from Russia, an old drab from Prussia,—
 All emigrants bound for our nice land.

Anduscias.

Here's a wise politician, who thought the condition
 Of that fickle rascal, the people,

Demanded improvement. He joined a grand movement,
And hanged was as high as the steeple.

Alloker.

Here's a booby from Pindus, a poet from Indus,
With Cherokees, Chickasaws, Chocktaws ;
A sack full of fanquis, a bag full of Yankees,
From cities whose names give one lock-jaws.

Oria.

Here's a party of gluttons, all pig-brains or muttons,
A rabble of foul fustilarians ;
Twelve monks of St. Francis ; a deacon who dances ;
And ninety-nine Anythingarians.

CHORUS OF LOCUSTS.

So here we are mustered ; our governor blustered
At twelve o'clock yesterday awfully ;
But he'll surely not blame us, our freight is so famous
Of mortals who've revelled unlawfully.

Mephistopheles.

Gentlemen, thanks, I like such punctuality ;
I see you've got a famous spirit-cargo ;
The Fates be praised, we need not very far go,
To introduce them to complete sodality
With Cerberus and Pluto. 'Faith, they seem
Rare samples of the earth's most vile rascality.
So much the better and the worse. The dream
Of filth in which they passed their lives away
Is gone for ever. Henceforth *my* embargo
Is on their worships. We must off to Hell ;

'Time presses ; I have been this hour detained
With an old gentleman, whom life enchained
Longer than I expected. No delay
Is needed now ; see Hermes and the stranger
Waiting for us apart. Old bald-pate knows not
As yet the gentleman with whom he travels,
Nor shall he till the time arrives. Too soon
By several hours for him, or much I err.
At present he believes he's out of danger,
And hops, as hops the sun on Easter-day ;—
So—so—immerse them in this thunder-cloud,
And guard them well ; each visible to each,
In any shape that will the senses mock
With hopes fallacious. So, good bye, Abaddon !
I'll tell Lord Satan something that will serve you,
And raise you higher in his sovran favour.

SCENE X.

HEAVEN.

The ALL-FATHER. In the distance the SONS OF GOD.

The First Archangel.

O Lord! who art our Lord, perfection's splendour,
 We bow before thy thrones of cloud and fire ;
 To Thee, whose footstool are the heavens, we render
 The joy and worship that our hearts inspire.
 As leap the rills from the eternal mountains,
 As the streams seek the ever-flowing sea,
 As runs the fawn to the bright cooling fountains,
 So turn our fainting spirits still to Thee.

The Second Archangel.

Thou hast thy chambers in the Vast Unbounded,
 Thine are the Keys of Life and Death and Hell ;
 The myriad stars on which thy thrones are founded,
 And the sun's daily songs thy glories tell.
 Thou gavest the moon her seasons, to the ocean
 Thou didst assign the bounds that chain its might ;
 Strength to the thunders, to the lightnings motion,
 Flowers to the earth, and to the planets light.

The Third Archangel.

At thy command the lordly sun upriseth,
 Quick at thy bidding the fierce storms grow tame ;
 Thou speak'st—an earthquake follows—death chastiseth
 The impious scoffers of thine hallowed name.

Yet gently as a hen her chicks will gather
 Beneath her folding wings of love and care,
 Dost thou, the Ancient and All Loving Father
 Thy prodigal children in thy mercy spare.

Chorus of Angels.

Hew shall our faltering tongues declare thy praises ?
 How shall we hymn the gladness of thy ways ?
 Language and music yield not tones or phrases
 Worthy of Thee, the Ancient One of Days.
 Read in our inmost souls the unbounded treasure
 Of faith, obedience, reverence, love, and awe ;
 And make our duty form our greatest pleasure,
 While humbly walking in thy Holy Law.

Gretchen.

Lord ! wilt thou hear the lowliest of thy servants,
 Prostrate before the footstool of thy thrones ?

The All-Father.

What wouldest thou, Margaret ?

Gretchen.

Mercy, mercy, mercy !

The All-Father.

Hast thou not had it, Margaret, else why here ?

Gretchen.

Not for myself I ask it, but for *him*.

The All-Father.

Thou meanest my servant Goethe, whom even now
 The Spirit of Death hath loosed from earth.

Gretchen.

I do.

The All-father.

He hath not done the mission that I gave him ;
He bowed his soul to human lusts—and died.
Who spares the wicked, wrongs the man that's just.

Gretchen.

Alas ! the Tempter is too strong for Man.

The All-father.

Man may subdue the Tempter if he will ;
The Soul *he* had was equal to the task.

Gretchen.

Lord ! I did love him—for *my* sake have mercy ;
Or if thou wilt not, join my soul to his ;
Where'er its destined home may be I care not.

The All-father.

Is, then, thy love so strong ?

Gretchen.

Alas ! it is ;

I never felt in Heaven while Goethe lived ;
But still I cherished hope that time and change
Might make him worthy of Almighty mercy ;
And so I dreamed, and dreamed that we should meet
But now that dream is gone—he is condemned,
And I am lonely even here in Heaven.

The All-Father.

Margaret, this man forgot—deserted thee.

Gretchen.

No—not forgot ; I know he did desert me ;
 The pride and vanity of his high place
 Raised him above me ; but I feel that still
 I dwelt within his innermost heart and soul.
 Forget me !—no—he never could forget me.

The first Archangel.

What ! if God took thee at thy word, and sent thee
 Down to deep Hell ?

Gretchen.

Not Hell if *he* be there ;

Where'er he be to *me* can ne'er be Hell.
 Place me but by his side, and I am blest ;
 Let me but look upon him once again,
 And whisper to his soul one little word
 Of the undying love I feel for him,
 And then do with me as thou wilt, for never
 Can I be happy while he sits in sorrow.
 What ! shall that noble soul that so loved Nature
 Perish, because it erred as Man must err ?
 What ! shall that thought divine, that loved all Beauty
 Die for the transient errors of an hour !
 What ! if he did not give his life for Men,
 Did he not make his soul a thing of majesty
 By contemplation of thy wondrous worlds ?
 The glory of the Universe, the splendour
 Clothing Creation in ineffable grandeur ;

The innumerable spheres of life, and light, and order,
Stars, planets, suns, shining, advancing onward
Beyond the grasp of thought, through boundless space ;
The wondrous word Eternity, that runs
Backwards for million centuries of Aïons,
And forward—forward—forward—forward still,
Until the soul, in speculation lost,
Returns to God the Maker—and repose ;
The magical dream of woods, the virgin morn
Lighting the shades with loveliness ; the bees
Humming o'er flowers, or by the sylvan springs
Whirling in silver circles ; May-day hours,
Whose innocent eyes shed spring and sunshine round
The gentle whispers of the breathing air,
The unseen lyres that breathe from forest trees,
The meadows, with fresh roses gaily pranked,
The sheep-bells' tinkling, the deep silent vales,
The wild goat browsing on the mountain's side,
The torrent tumbling down the rocks, the pine
Waving its green head in the spectral wind,
The pale stars mirrored on the woodland brook,
The moonlight streaming through the diamond lattice,
The lordly eagle's scream, the birds' blithe songs,
The proud tall yew trees tranquil in their beauty,
The starry-wimpled skies, the nymphal winds
That o'er the flowers with printless footsteps dance,
Nor brush away the dews ; the rustling leaves
In summer-time, when flute-like airs are breathing
Kisses amid the boughs ; the shepherd's pipe,
Whose music woke the startled forest Echoes
In their green bowers of shade ; the murmuring stream,
Soft as the song-like laughter of a child ;

The swallow skimming round her covert nest,
 The hawthorn's flowers of snow :—to sights and sounds
 And things like these he gave his thoughts,—in these
 He found the happiness for which he sighed ;
 In loving these, he loved and worshipped Thee ;
 And thus he grew inured to high desires
 And aspirations such as Poets feel
 When soaring high in Fancy's boundless worlds.
 Oh, must a soul divine as this be lost ?

The All-father.

I will not punish thee for this despair ;
 How can I punish thee for loving well ?
 But go—and, if thou canst, persuade the Judge
 Before whose seat he stands to pardon him,
 (For I have long resigned what claim I had
 On his immortal spirit, and have yielded
 Him up entirely to the Gods he served).
 The time may come, after purgation done,
 When he may yet rejoin thy soul in Heaven.

GRETCHEN flies off.

How wondrous in its strength is woman's love !
 Through the long years since Margaret's spirit left
 The earth, and dwelt in that blest Sphere of Light
 To which her beautiful life of virtue led,
 I've watched her well, and saw how much she pined
 For him who was not worthy of her truth.
 He in his pride of place despised the girl,
 His heart grew hard and haughty, fierce and cold
 As marble, till it felt no sympathy
 With any thing on earth, and thus it waxed
 Wretched, as all unsympathising hearts

Must ever be.—How say ye, Sons of God !
Hath she done well to pardon and pray thus ?

The Sons of God.

She hath.

The All Father.

Behold, she stands by him already ;
Her angel soul illumines the black Abyss
With rays celestial in their purity,
And the dusk Shadows gaze on her with wonder
Mingled with awe, but cannot hurt, for, lo !
The snowy armour of pure innocence
In which she always walked protects her now.

The Sons of God.

Blest and successful be her mission thither,
While we, rejoicing in the Father's love,
Chant a new hymn amid the heavenly realms.

Heaven closes.

SCENE XI.

SPACE.

MEPHISTOPHELES, HERMES, and GOETHE *flying rapidly along.*
A Troop of weird-like SHAPES and SPIRITS before,
around and after them. Distant thunder.

Mephistopheles.

Onward still, and ever onward,
 Like three shooting stars, we go ;
 Space around us—space beyond us,
 Space above, and space below.

Hermes.

Yonder swings the globe ; how little
 Seems that deity of man !
 Hardly even its loftiest mountain
 From this distance can we scan.

Goethe.

Brighter, bolder grows my spirit
 Since it left its mortal mould ;
 This is the true sphere of freedom
 I so panted to behold.

Mephistopheles.

Who that gazes on that fragment,
 Like a mote in broad blue space,
 E'er would dream that for its atoms
 Hatë should move the human race ?

Hermes.

Lo ! for this the conqueror murders,
 Despots slaughter, robbers slay ;
 Statesmen perjure, virgins sell them
 To the spoiler day by day.

Goethe.

Fraud and slander, lust and lying,
 Theft and cheating, base deceit,
 Falsehood, blasphemy, and bloodshed,
 Give its tiny mites their meat.

Mephistopheles.

There the rank and lewd seducer
 From the mother buys the child ;
 There the felon smiling husband
 Sells and sees his wife defiled.

Hermes.

There the bloodhound priest of Error
 Prays and preaches plague and pest ;
 Shooting falsehood's venom'd arrows,
 Till they poison every breast.

Goethe.

There the strutting pigmy princeling,
 Thinks mankind his slave and tool ;
 Robs, oppresses, smites down thousands,
 And they let him !—which is fool ?

Mephistopheles.

There the black and viperish lawyer,
 Robs, protected by King Law ;

Widows, orphans, men, and infants,
Daily fill his dragon maw.

Hermes.

There the monied man grown fetid
With the pride of wealth and state,
Thanks his God so many people
Yearly starve to make him great.

Goethe.

There the fat adulterous courtier
Daily sells his very soul,
That some dozen knaves may see him.
In a gilded chariot roll.

Mephistopheles.

There the fawning false physician,
Hired to stay his friend's disease,
Gives him poisons to increase it,
That he may increase his fees.

Hermes.'

There the staid and portly merchant
Cheats and lies in myriad ways ;
Cent. per cent. by trick ;—on Sunday
See how piously he prays.

Goethe.

There the mitred saintly prelate
Preaches meekly to the town ;
Step behind the scenes, and see him
Knock a starving curate down.

Mephistopheles.

There the gross and greasy glutton
 Spends on one luxurious feast,
 What would keep a wise poor scholar
 For a twelvemonth at the least.

Hermes.

There the gray and rat-like miser
 Squeezes from the poor their all,
 That his heir may spend it gaily
 On a harlot, pimp, and brawl.

Goethe.

There the parasite who spaniels
 At some beastly rich man's knees,
 Swears that in his lord and master
 God personified he sees.

Mephistopheles.

There the empty perfumed dandy
 Finds in his sweet monkey air
 Graces that might make a seraph
 Clothed in heavenly light despair.

Hermes.

There the false and filthy-hearted
 Swears affection, faith, and truth ;
 Look within—you see a scorpion
 With false eye and deadly tooth.

Goethe.

There the Judge, who should be honest,
 Makes the very devils blush,

That his son may have another
Footman clothed in lace and plush.

Mephistopheles.

There the venal cut-throat soldier
Struts in purple and brocade,
Gold and silver—people never
Think that murder is his trade.

Hermes.

There the scorpion-tongue of woman
Stings the life of life to death ;
Honour, modesty, and virtue,
Wither in her poisonous breath.

Goethe.

There the slanderous slime of envy
Slavers all that's good and true ;
More are done to death by falsehood
Than the plague-spot ever slew.

Mephistopheles.

What a very curious fancy
Made the Gods create mankind !
For what purpose, earthly, heavenly,
Could the knaves have been designed ?

Hermes.

Some say men are merely demons,
Sent for torture to the earth ;
Others think them speaking ourans,
Made to yield the immortals mirth.

Goethe.

Men and monkeys merely differ
In the faculty of speech ;
Though I think it might be better,
If each were not fiend to each.

Mephistopheles.

Onward still, and ever onward,
Like three shooting stars of light ;
Through the blue empyrean heaven,
Have we made our magic flight.

Hermes.

Nearer, nearer still, and nearer,
We approach the wondrous goal,
Where the judgment-seat of Satan
Stands and awes the guilty soul.

Goethe.

Ha ! what horror makes me tremble ?
What new fear—what place is this ?
Liar, traitor, now I know thee—

Mephistopheles.

This is Satan's Bower of Bliss !

SCENE XII.

TARTARUS OF HADES.

MEPHISTOPHELES, CHARON, GOETHE. *A countless multitude
of Phantoms, Shapes and Shadows.*

Mephistopheles.

So we have crossed the famous river Acheron,
And Styx flows by within a score of toises ;
So far at least we've wended safe and sound,
Our brows with garlands of white poplar crowned.
The screaming Shadows and infernal Voices
That hovered o'er our path have passed away ;
We're near our journey's end—sing and be gay :
Don't be afraid—your soul's safe yet—I'll back her on
Until she stands before that Judge profound,
Wiser than any now on earthly ground,
Who strips men's hearts of all the burnished lacquer on,
And shews them bare and naked to the day ;
Exhaustless mines of lust, hate, filth, and falsehood,
A sight enough to make black hairs turn gray.—
Here is the Styx—a brown and stinking river ;
Yonder's Cocytus, echoing deep with groans
Enough to melt the hearts of stocks or stones,
Priests or hyenas :—you can smell the stench ;
They've buried in't that famous King of the French,
Louis Quartorze, whilom so grand and flourishing ;
That powerful monarch's fetid heart and liver
Pollutes this pleasant atmosphere around you,
And makes the waters loathsome, dark, and rotten.

Plug up your nostrils with this lump of cotton—
 Quick—or the royal fragrance will confound you.
 There is Pharaoh, and the wife of Lot,
 A woman of whom Rabbis old relate
 Scandalous tales, which I would rather not ;
 Calumny being a thing I fiercely hate.
 Here is the flaunting wife of Captain Potiphar,
 Ox-eyed like Juno, stately in her beauty,
 Large and majestic. Would you wish a knot of her
 Dark flowing ringlets? They no more owe duty
 To her bold husband, who was one of those
 (Millions on earth, although you never knew
 The thing before) whom God in his omnipotence
 And multiform divinity, creates
 In shape of man, but soulless. While they live
 They have earth's pleasures ; when they die, they die ;
 Passing at once into annihilation.
 The great majority of human kind,
 Dear Sir, are animals of this dull order ;
 Only a small minority have souls.
 A lucky thing ; for were they all immortal,
 They'd soon exhaust our Tartaréan coals.

Gods ! what a drove of ghosts, men, women, children,
 Sweep through this starless atmosphere of death ;
 Lurid and purple like the poisonous breath
 Of plague-corrupted wretches, gasping, dying.—
 What deep and rending screams ! what wasps and hornets !
 Borne headlong on the impetuous blasts of Hell ;
 Lycanthropi, gray Wolf-men from weird Thrace ;
 Hither and thither with winged Serpents flying,
 Hunting the damned in diabolic chase,

Rending their shrieking ghosts with fury fell ;
 Darkness streamed o'er with gleams of coppery light,
 More horrible and monstrous than the night
 Of Afrit deserts, when the Storm-Fiend raves ;
 Rain, snow, and hail, that swell the Stygian waves ;
 And dusky vapours. Blasphemies obscene
 Against the name of God, themselves, and all
 The race of mortals.—Swift, St. Patrick's dean,
 Ne'er drew such scenes as this with pen of gall,
 And flame-clothed spirit. Curses, such as cornets
 Swear in their drunken mess-rooms ; groans bewildering,
 All mixed together in one gross hotch-potch,
 Like haggis, prized so much by the savoury Scotch.

See yonder shapes, terrific to behold,
 Riding upon the backs of shrieking men.
 These are their crimes. When wicked wretches die
 Their evil works in life become embodied
 In foulest Monsters, such as those you see
 Deformed from head to foot, with fetid smell,
 And voices terrible. Beside the bier
 They stand, and when the eidolon of the Dead
 Beholds them it cries out, *From such as these
 May God defend me : who, and what art thou,
 O most detestable of beasts ?* Whereat
 The Monster born of sin, replies, *I am
 Thine evil works. While thou wert in the flesh,
 Thou didst ride on me : now that thou art dead
 Upon thee I will ride for ever and ever.*
 And then the Monster mounts upon his back
 And all that see him, pale with terror cry,
Well art thou punished enemy of God.

Ghost.

Vision avaunt ! Thou art a feverish dream.
A night-mare spectre—hence—away ! away !

Monster.

By Dis, I swear to thee. I am no dream.
What—wouldst thou raise the guilty up to God ?
Wouldst thou have *Him* forgive—because they're dead—
Wretches whose lives on earth but imaged Hell ?

Charon.

Now then, to cross the Styx—hilloa ! hilloa !
You rascals dead who wish to pass this way !
Hilloa ! hilloa ! hilloa ! hilloa ! I say.

Mephistopheles.

Lord, what a crowd ! they scramble to and fro
In shoals, since there's no obolus to pay ;
Cockchafers scared by candle-light and brooms,
Could not run quicker in confused pell-mell
Than these poor Shadows to the Gates of Hell.
Numerous as leaves that fall when autumn winds
Rattle amid the faded forest branches,
Or wild birds seeking isles where summer blooms,
When hoary winter, fraught with rage, unbinds
His nipping gales, and o'er the æther launches
Eurus and Boreas, huntsmen of the skies.—
And what a motley mixture ! Kings, thieves, grooms,
Cobblers, pimps, soldiers, nobles, bishops, tinkers,
Scavengers, cabmen, duchesses, deep thinkers,
Pensioners, courtiers, aldermen, and harlots,

Lords of high lineage and the lowest varlets ;
 Monks, misers, Calvinists, and millionaires,
 Brahmins and opera-dancers, judges, bullies,
 Gamesters, fat butchers, procuresses, cullies,
 Bankers and usurers, quakers, bulls and bears,
 Cardinals, actors, maids of honour, clowns,
 Fools, misers, priests, prime ministers, hard drinkers,
 Felons in gray, and lawyers in black gowns.

Charon.

Hilloa ! hilloa ! hilloa ! Now then, ye rabble,
 Strip to the skin ; no article of dress
 Must come on board. The king must cast aside
 His golden cap and robe, the dame her shift,
 The beggar his old rags, the priest his cloak ;
 The virgin—if there be such a phoenix here—
 Her long and cherished ringlets ; and the clown
 His painted grin, and laugh-provoking daub :
 Bare as ye entered life so leave ye life ;
 Dustman and king are equal here in hell ?
 Such are the stern commands of Death and Fate.

Mephistopheles.

When will you take my bardic friend on board ?

Charon.

Not now—first come first served, is the rule I make ;
 I will not break it even for you, my lord.

King.

Fellow, make way—what ho !—where are my guards ?

Charon.

What bullying knave is this with portly air ?

King.

I am the mighty King of——

Charon.

Six foot length
Of earth by two in breadth ; your majesty
Will meet scant loyalty on the river Styx.

King.

Am I not then to cross in royal state ?
Is majesty in Hell a thing of nought ?

Charon.

Enter at once, or else I'll break your head ;
I have no time to bandy words with you.

King.

What ?—how ? vile slave, dare you thus talk to me ?

Charon.

Ho—hangman !—you with the halter in your hand,
Cast it round this king and haul him in.
So—so, well done ; now gag and handcuff him,
And if he dares to murmur, baste his hide—
With this tough thong of leather. Who are you ?

Coxcomb.

A man of fashion travelling to Elysium ;
I'll teach the saintly sumphs the art of dress.

Mephistopheles.

But they wear none in the Elysian Fields ;
Virtue and purity need no disguise.

Coxcomb.

Then if you please, I'd rather go to Hell,—
London or Paris ; for this place——

Chaxon.

Won't do

For folks like you ; but don't look blank, we'll take you
Where you shall have most noble company,
Popes, emperors, czars, fine women, and fair men,
Smug dandiprats that will delight your eyes.

Coxcomb.

And tailors ?

Mephistopheles.

Several millions at your service :—
Our many-mansioned palaces contain
Ladies and gentlemen of all degrees.

Coxcomb.

Fellow, don't prate ; you tire me,—let me pass.

Statesman.

I don't think death so hideous after all ;
'Tis not so pleasant as our palace though,
I wish, indeed, I had lived to cheat Prince B.
In that long treaty which the fool would sign,
Hoping to trick me by ambiguous phrase.

I've missed a brilliant order. Is it vain
 To sneak for rank and honour in this place?
 Why should it be so? Spirits are but men
 Quit of their bodies; men are knaves and asses,
 The exquisite tools with which we do our work;
 Doubtless I'll find sufficiency of both
 In this broad land to serve my purposes.

Thief.

A rummy place is this, but dark enough
 For very pretty filchings;—no police,
 No gaslight, and no telegraph to tell;
 I find no fault with it, if this be hell.

Virgin.

Snatched in the beauteous morning of my years,
 Fate bore me hither, veiled in saddest tears;
 But yon bright angel-choirs, whose lips and eyes
 Salute me sister, turn to bliss my sighs.

Shepherd.

Farewell! sweet country-life of health and ease,
 Sunshine, and dance, and song, and flowers, and trees;
 Day-dreams beside the cool and whispering brook,
 And flocks obedient to the guiding crook;
 Hours of delight and innocence enjoyed,
 Of toil that tired not, bliss that never cloyed,
 Farewell—a long farewell! whate'er may be
 My lot in death, my thoughts will turn to thee!

Clover.

O Virgin, fairer than the Morning Star,

O lovely image ever in my breast ;
 Let me enfold thee in these longing arms
 Which will have Paradise when they have thee.

Hephistopheles.

A very silly bumpkin. Yonder Phantom
 Inspired the youth with memories of the past,
 And painted on his soul a beaming image
 Of her who was his mistress. See, he flits
 Beside her, fancying it is she—a notion
 Wild and fantastical. The ladye-love
 For whom our lover feels these melting fires,
 Lives, laughs, eats, dances, sleeps, and has hot dreams,
 And quite forgets her gallant, who departed
 Life in a fit of sentimental bliss,
 Hoping she'd follow him to heaven or hell.
 I look into the vistas of the future,
 Some thirty years from this mild day in March,
 And see a fat old woman, pimple-faced,
 With dugs for breasts, and elephantine legs,
 And waist as graceful as a dromedary's,
 Thick calves, beef cheeks, and brandy-smelling breath,
 Grog-nosed, with some fifteen obstreperous brats,
 And awkward hoydens. What a change is here
 From our poor lover's fancy-fashioned Venus
 Of shining eyes, white teeth, and rose-sweet lips.

Misanthrope.

I'm not surprised that men love dogs so much,
 For dogs, like men, are pitiful sneaking rogues.
 There lives no man who has not in his breast
 Some secret locked, which, if revealed, would make him
 Despised and hated by all human kind.

Mephistopheles.

Two maxims first propounded by our friend
From Weimar, learned, no doubt, from his own heart.

Misanthrope.

And is this Hell? 'tis not half black enough
For the best man I ever happed to know.
Weak as they seem, those mortal worms have oft
Made a worse Hell than this on their own earth.
Does Satan lack invention? Let him go
To Rome or Spain, and ask the Inquisition;
They'll teach him how to torture two-legged knaves.

Pantycist.

The wonders of the Universe are boundless,
The space illimitable;—As the mind
Cannot conceive Eternity of Time,
That no beginning had, and fears no end,
So the small human eye is blinded, lost,
And valueless, when peering into Space,
That seems itself as vast as Time or God.
Lo, the astronomer with his glass! he sees
In one short hour before his field of view
An army of bright stars, as vast and countless
As the thronged millions of the Xerxean host,
March on before his dazzled eyes, and light
The wide celestial vault with splendour; each
A world itself, or centre of new worlds,
Larger than man's small earth as *it* exceeds
A grain of sand; and who shall say that these
Marvellous realms of glory, order, beauty,
Are not the homes, the happy, innocent homes.

Of spirits great and noble, wise and good,
 Proportioned to the spheres in which they dwell,
 Archangels, Seraphs, Cherubim, or Gods ?
 They are not wrecks of worlds—they gleam all perfect.
 They are not germs of worlds, but orbs complete
 For happiness and life. The God who makes
 Even on our earth, our feeble, shadowy earth,
 Nothing but what to use and beauty tends,
 Has not designed and clothed such mighty mansions
 Simply for show, to taper-light small men
 To feats of gallantry, or theft, or blood ;—
 All earth is full of life, land, sea, and air ;
 Why should Death reign in god-like space alone ?

Visionary.

A boat—a boat on a golden stream,
 And it floats to where I stand ;
 And it wafts me flowers of the brightest gleam
 From the beautiful Paradise land ;
 And it bears a tree of the priceless fruit
 That grows in that bower divine ;
 Which my own true love hath sent to me,
 To bud on these brows of mine.

Now my soul is one of the host of stars,
 And it soars in the moonlit sphere,
 Come hither, come hither mine own true love,
 For thy spirit's twin is near ;
 And it heaves like the sea when the dreamy moon
 Fills its bosom with love divine—
 Let me clasp once more that soul of light
 To this panting soul of mine.

Traveller.

Wonders on wonders ! ocean, earth, and sky,
 Have nothing equal to these shadowy realms,
 Interminable, boundless, vast, cloud-zoned ;
 The tumbling cataracts of flame from high,
 The frowning mountains on whose awful peaks
 The Titan Phantoms of the Past sit throned,
 Solitude, silence, sadness, solemn gloom,
 And death-like coldness—all proclaim the Eternal Tomb-

Old Man.

Since the rosy garlands of my life
 Long have withered, children, friends, and wife ;
 What have I to do with being ? Naught ;—
 Life itself was but one saddening thought.
 Blest, since in Death's arms I find once more,
 Fresh and youthful, all I loved before.

Critic.

In this infernal, stupid place,
 God-fashioned for the human race,
 So many glaring faults I find
 As must disgust a critic's mind.

Student.

Be silent railer ; why shouldst *thou* pollute
 With ribald tongue the Mysteries of Death.

Critic.

Nay, but hear me first ; be civil.
 Here's confusion worse confounded ;
 Pagan, Christian, god and devil,
 In one stupid mess compounded.

Mephistopheles.

Cease your vile, æsthetic ranting,
 Critic's cant is worst of canting.
 Here's a pretty sneaking fellow,
 Who must needs complain and bellow,
 If Hell don't, to his vexation,
 Suit *his* notions of damnation.

Artist.

A scene for Rembrandt—darkness vast yet visible.
 Oh that I had a brush and pallet here !

Merryman.

I'll cap that with a wish as quaint and quizzible :
 Oh, that *I* had a foaming pot of beer !

Henry.

Henry, thou knowest for love of thee I died,
 For thee I stained my young and virgin pride ;
 Thou wert my life, my soul, my more than God,
 The star of heaven, to which through fire I trod,
 And trembled not. —Thou'lt not forget me.—No,
 'Twas love of thee first brought me to this woe ;
 May'st thou be happy now when I'm away ;
 Alas, thou wilt not—old, and sad, and gray
 Has grown thy Spirit, once as roses bright ;
 Darkness has fallen upon thee ; cold and blight
 Have nipped thy soul : and thou art pale and sad
 Even as poor I, but yet not wholly mad !
 Alas ! I did not think that love was this,
 That grief like ours should spring from what seemed bliss

Like heaven on earth—that *thou* shouldst still live on
 In speechless woe, and I be dead and gone ;
 But yet—Alas ! where runs my wandering brain ?
 I know not ; but I writhe with grief and pain ?
 Here in my heart of hearts, where once I saw
 Thine image only as my rule and law.

* * * * *

Mepphistopheles, singing.

Trust not a woman's sighs or tears,
 For they are false—sweet pretty dears !
 Their smile are all deceitful shams ;
 Themselves but wolves disguised as lambs.

Tinker.

Here I am, a jolly tinker,
 Travelling always, and a skinker
 Of full flagons. Maids and lasses,
 If you've anything that passes
 Water through it, I will mend it,
 And from breakages defend it.
 Heigho ! the jolly tinker,
 Ever toper, never thinker.
 No one ever saw before
 A dead tinker in these regions ;
 We and donkeys never swore
 To the King of Styx allegiance.
 I'm the first that ever died.—
 Heigho ! the jolly tinker ;
 Yet I am not puffed with pride,
 Welcome, then, the flagon skinker.

Millionaire.

O Christ ! restore me to loved life once more ;
 I cannot bear the misery of this night.
 My soul is maddened, tortured with despair.
 The splendid palaces, the bowing train,
 The tapestried rooms, with gold and silver bright,
 Mocking the glories of the sunny skies ;
 The marble wonders from Ausonia fair,
 The forest, garden, steed, and bower, and hall,
 And gems that might have formed a monarch's prize ;
 Women and gold—whatever sense, or sight,
 Or touch, or smell could covet, once were mine ;
 Restore me to them, Thou whose hand benign
 Holds pardon ever for poor man. Lo ! all
 My treasures weep for me, and still my soul recall.

Mephistophiles.

Why, what a false and sneaking knave is this !
 He calls on Christ, who never gave a cent
 To Christ, a bit of bread or cup of water :
 Old Dives was a saint to this lewd sinner.

Charon.

Aye, let him howl ; 'twill exercise his lungs
 For the loud shouting which the flames of Hell
 Will train him to within a little time.

Mephistopheles.

Can any wonder, when a wretch like this
 Is million-worshipped on the earth, that men
 Wise, noble-hearted, great, but poor in purse,
 Should grow, like the sage Greek Diagoras,

Atheists, when they see such perjured cheats
Prosper, get rich, and spend delightful days ?

Charon.

You're too severe, Sir, on this Christian age.

Mephistopheles.

Christian, forsooth ! Why yes, it bears the name ;
They laugh at the Pagans for the worship paid
Dumb wooden idols, things of clay and stone,
And dross of mines ; such senseless image-worship
Provokes contempt, while they themselves, good men,
Nurtured in knowledge of the true Divine,
Prostrate themselves, debase, and sell their souls
Daily to things of flesh and rottenness,
God-Money, God-High Rank, God-Lust, God-Lies.

Charon.

Aye, sir, they rail at Judas, who sold Christ
For thirty shillings, while the cozening knaves
Sell Him and God each day for thirty pence,
And yet have not the decency to repent
And hang themselves, like poor maligned Iscariot.

Horatian.

*Mors et fugacem persequitur virum,
Nec parcit imbellis juventæ
Poplitibus, timidoque tergo.*

Lucretian.

*Licet quot vis vivendo vincere secla,
Mors æterna tamen nihilominus illa manebit*

Englishman.

Talk honest English, comrades, if you please,
 Not pedant saws and sentences like these ;
 You, who quote Horace, sir, would aptlier say,
 In homely speech, *Death smites the runaway,*
Nor spares the faltering stripling's coward limbs ;
 While you, who chant Lucretius' sibyl hymns,
 Might tell the mob, *Live long as e're you will,*
Nathelesse eternal death awaits you still.
 An atheist maxim, sir, which you and I,
 Who find we still exist, must needs deny.

Antiquary.

A dredging-net to drag the Styx would draw
 Rare wonders of old times to light. I wish
 My nurse had wrapped one round me when I died.

Charon.

What Acarnanian hog comes floundering on ?

Glutton.

Venison, turtle, whitebait, punch,
 Turbot, pheasants, brawn, champagne,
 Gorgeous breakfast, dinner, lunch,
 Shall ye ne'er be mine again ?
 Grapes, pines, puddings, strawberries, pears,
 Almonds, raisins, figs, and jelly,
 Lost for ever !—or my heir's ;—
 Oh, my soul is racked with cares—
 Would I ne'er had been but belly !

Mephistopheles.

This is a worthy visitor—a son

Of Gryllus, the companion of Ulysses,
Whom Circè changed into a sow, but who
Refused to be restored to human shape,
Preferring to high thoughts and noble feelings,
The squalid indolence of a filthy pig.

Charon.

Who is this knave with broad, square, brutal face,
Eyes like a beast's, and fiendish smile that gloats
On thoughts of blood, hypocrisy, and fraud ?

Mephistopheles.

A truly British judge, whose Stygian look
Dropsied by poison welling from his soul,
Is but a faint reflection of the foul
Cocytian passions of his black bad heart.
Baron, come on, we've room for you with Scroggs.

Fix.

I feel delighted since I came to Hell ;
I met the Decalogue upon my way
(A portly gentleman like the Lord Mayor),
Who told me I was sure of perfect bliss.
He seems a very fine old hearty fellow,
And shook me warmly by the hand, and swore
That he would bring down Moses and Elias
To sup with me, and drink a stoup of wine
With old Sir Jonah Barrington, who lived
For three days in the belly of a whale.

Child.

For six short years with gay and flower-like heart,

The only joy of my fond mother's eyes;
 Stern Death stepped in, and tore our souls apart,
 Heedless of her sweet prayers, or my sad cries.

Cooper.

Oh, could I but barter my soul for a bottle
 Of brandy or gin, rum, whiskey, port, claret, or punch,
 I'd lose not a moment, but moisten my dearly-loved
 throttle,
 And give to Sir Cerberus body and spirit to munch.
 Ho—ho!

Moralist.

In all our actions life still passes on.
 We die, while doing that for which alone
 Our life was granted. Nay, though we do nothing,
 Time keeps his constant pace, and flies as fast
 In idleness as in employment. Whether
 We play or labour, sleep or dance, or toil,
 Or lift our souls in high commune with God,
 The sun posts on, and the sand glides away.
 One hour of wickedness is just as long
 As one employed in virtue, but the difference
 Between them both is infinite indeed.
 The first is vicious waste, the last lays up
 Treasures of bliss for all eternity,
 Of which not Fate itself can rob the soul.
 The husbandman who sows, but is content
 To wait until he reaps, is like the man
 Who lays his goodness out, with certain hope
 That Heaven prepares him an abundant harvest,
 Which will a hundredfold repay his toil.

Casnist.

Virtue and Vice are merely names of things

That never did, and never can exist.
 For what is Virtue? What is Good? What Bad?
 The mind of man can never hit the point
 Precise, that separates the Right and Wrong.
 We know not what is little, great or small,
 Or long or broad. Tell me how many grains
 Of corn will make a heap? Will one, two, three?
 You answer, No. Will four, five, six, or seven?
 And so by units I proceed to ask you :
 At last we reach a thousand. You bawl out,
 Here is the heap : but only just before,
 When at nine hundred and the ninety-ninth,
 You said there was *no* heap. How then can *one*
 Poor little grain make such a great distinction?
 Now, if this reasoning be to sin applied,
 We learn at once there's no such thing as Sin.
 Will one sin damn your soul? You answer, No.
 Will two, or three, or four! You still say, No.
 But will a thousand sins? You shout out, Yes.
 Will not nine hundred sins and ninety-nine
 Do so? Of course they will, at once you say.
 Then by degrees I pluck them one by one
 Until you fail to fix the very number
 That will condemn you to Satanic Flame.
 If this be so, what nonsense 'tis to call
 Anything sin, or think we shall be damned.
 The thing has been invented all by priests,
 And howsoe'er a man may sin, I'm certain,
 He'll go to heaven by the aid of grace,
 And the atonement made by Mary's son.

Mephistopheles.

This gentleman, I think, will find our Judge

Pay scant attention to sorites logic :
Or the nice quiddities of Babbi Paul.

Generalissimo.

An excellent spot for ambuscades, methinks :
Gods ! what a beautiful defile is here.
I'd undertake, with but one staunch brigade,
To kill ten thousand of the foe with ease.

Assassin.

Hide thy diminished head, poor Venice ; hide
Thy brows, imperial Rome ;—thy colonnades
And sombre ruins ne'er possessed such fine
And tempting corners for stiletto work,
As in these beautiful nooks I see around.—
Oh, for a purse of gold, a man, and knife.

Courtesan.

Blest be the Gods, thrice blest, sweet virgin Death,
The only friend the poor possess on earth ;
Gladly I seek the death-stream of repose,
Gladly I fly that worst of hells, the world.

Miser.

O Gold, my gold, sweet glittering, musical gold,
Shall I indeed enclasp thee never more ?
Never again those chests shall I behold,
Brighter than God himself with Indian ore ?

Pauper.

Now that all my cares are fled,
And I'm numbered with the dead,
Merrily, merrily, all the day,
I will dance, and sing, and play.

Merrily, merrily, cheerily, cheerily,
Dance, and sing, and laugh, and play.

Lawyer.

O God! condemn my soul, but spare my body :
It was the soul that led me into sin.

Baron.

O God! absolve my soul, but rack my body,
But for my body I had been most pure.

Mephistopheles.

Wretches! in vain you grow sophistical ;
The soul and body in all guilt are partners :
Neither can err without the other's aid.
Once on a time a certain lord who had
A beauteous garden rich with luscious fruits,
Placed a blind man and one who was a cripple,
Within its blooming bounds, and went his way.
The lame man tempted the blind man to raise him
Upon his back and bear him to the trees,
From which they robbed and shared the dainty spoil :
When in the evening the great lord came home
He missed the fruits and called the two before him ;
Lord! 'twas not I, exclaimed the first arch thief ;
How could I see the fruit trees? I am blind.
Lord! 'twas not I, exclaimed the crippled knave,
How could I walk unto them? I am lame.
Then the great lord placed on the blind man's back
The crafty cripple : thus, said he, the theft
Was done, and as you mutually shared
The spoil, so shall you share the penalty.—
And so he gave them over to the Judge.

Italian.

O Liberty, immortal child of heaven,
 Once more I taste thy boundless blessings, freed
 From chains, and Spielberg's dungeons, hell on earth ;
 And him, the devil-hearted Emperor Francis,
 Who held me, like a beast immured from light,
 From friends, home, parents, brethren, children, wife,
 And the sweet commune with soul-charming books,
 In solitary bondage, till I grew
 A moping idiot, laughing, howling, weeping,
 Cursing the God that gave me to the world,—
 A brute in shape of man. And what my crime ?
 Murder—Theft—Blasphemy—Adultery ? No ;
 My crime was Virtue.—Can there be a crime
 More odious in the eyes of tyrants ? Mine
 Was vicious in the extreme. I loved the land
 That gave me birth, the land of fatal beauty,
 My Paradise, mine own fair Italy,
 The Vesper-Star amid the world of nations,
 That gaze but feel not. With a holy love
 I felt her like a passion in my brain,
 And laboured for her freedom from his gripe
 Remorseless, like the Arch-Fiend's on a soul
 Innocent, beauteous, young, but weak and frail ;
 I lost—he conquered—chained me—I am here ;—
 O God eternal, free my much-wronged land !

Hungarian.

God of the warriors of Arpad, look
 Upon thy servant, from thy throne of stars,
 Who humbly owns the omnipotence of thy love :
 And, as I died for mine own noble land

By rack and steel, have mercy on me, God,
 Whose sun is radiant o'er the earth that holds
 The bones of my heroic brethren fallen
 In fight for Hungary. The blue heavens are smiling
 Above the fields red with the sacred blood
 Of us and of our fathers ; send, O Lord,
 Thy genial rays, that flowers divine may spring
 From that all-hallowed stream, too grand to flow
 In mere corruption. Holy drops like these
 Sanctify earth, and purge it of all sin ;—
 O God, great Father of my father, God
 Of Heaven, of Earth, and of the Sea, I ask Thee
 Mercy for thy frail servant in the flesh ;
 But, oh, whate'er the fate ordained for me,
 Shower down thy light upon my land beloved,
 That she may rise and take her stand once more,
 A Queen amid the nations of the world !

Polk.

Mercy for Poland, with my dying breath
 I cried, but stern revenge upon the hands
 That tore her beauties piecemeal ! Here in Hell
 If they be prisoned, send me too to Hell,
 Omnipotent Ruler of the Universe !
 Set me but face to face and hand to hand
 With Russian, Austrian, Prussian ; my revenge
 Shall be so great, I ask no other heaven.

Charon.

Silence ! we do not suffer roistering here ;
 Here comes a grave and stately gentleman.

Mephistopheles.

One of those things they call Philosophers,
 Wise in their speeches, fools in very deed,
 Like noodle Anaxagoras, who preferred
 A grain of wisdom to a ton of gold.

Charon.

When Cicero was crossing here, the fellow
 Said one good thing, while whining o'er his head,
 Which he brought with him in a greasy napkin :
Nihil tam absurdè dici potest,
Quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum.
 Since such are wise men, I will mate with fools.

Philosopher.

Heaven, how I thank thee for this boon divine
 Of death, that frees me from the chains of life,
 And sends my spirit like an eagle forth,
 To soar into stupendous worlds, with gaze
 Fixed steadfastly upon the sun of Truth.
 How have I prayed for this eternal change,
 At morn, at noon, and in the silent night,
 When my thoughts wandered to the burning stars,
 And I grew purer, nobler, better, wiser,
 By gazing on them, till my spirit leapt
 In fancy up, and walked amid their light.
 Freedom—the boundless freedom of the mind
 Henceforth is mine for ever, and I live
 With those whose souls were my soul's worshipped idols;
 Socrates, Shakspeare, Plato, Dante—all
 Who trod the earth like gods, to make men gods.
 Eternity of Rapture, to behold

Their spirits daily, hourly, wandering free
 Beneath the ambrosial heaven, and in the scenes
 That make Elysium rival Paradise ;
 Beauty, repose, light, music, perfume, joy.
 Reverently bent to catch from their bright lips
 The words of wisdom, virtue, faith, and truth,
 That lift their natures almost up to God's.
 The jarring strife that forms the daily world
 Of man, his bickerings, passions, vices, crimes,
 Removed for ever from my aching sight,
 Were bliss itself ;—but commune such as this,
 With the sublimest souls that earth e'er saw,
 Makes my soul drunk with rapture, and I feel
 All heaven within the sphere of my glad thought.

Mephistopheles.

I know that fellow, Charon, very well ;
 He passed his life in reading and in moping :
 I tempted him for several years in vain.

Charon.

These bookmen seldom fall into your nets,
 Unless, like your stout friend there, they abjure
 The priesthood Nature gave them, and fall down
 Before the grinning idols, Wealth and Power.

Mephistopheles.

Well, it is pleasant when they *do* recant,
 And worship me as George Buchanan worshipped.
 There is a famous English bard at present,
 My Poet Laureate, whom you'll see some day

Snug in the Hell of Arch-Apostacy,
With several of his brethren. Who comes here ?

Priest.

A reverend priest ; I died in sanctity ;
St. Paul himself is not more sure of bliss.

Charon.

I'm glad to hear it, holy sir ; I hope
You were most tolerant to your erring brother.

Priest.

I should indeed despair, sir, if I thought
That those who held a different creed from mine
Had any chance of mercy ; *my* religion
Alone is right, all others damned deceits.

Mephistopheles.

Charon, for *my* sake let that spirit pass ;
I find from what he says that he is mine.

Charon.

'Tis very true,—he bears your lordship's badge.

Boat.

For Pluto's sake, old master mine
Take in no more, my sides are cracking ;
My bottom's breaking, and the brine
Of Styx my way-worn ribs is racking.
I'd not complain if 'twere good wine,
But this stale bilge is worse than blacking.

I've several thousand souls on board,
 Who'll sink me to the river's bottom ;
 I ne'er before conveyed a horde
 Of souls so very foul—Od rot 'em.

Charon.

Be quiet, Baris, you must bear
 The burden meekly, this great lord
 Must cross, although, upon my word,
 I scarce can stow him anywhere.

Mephistopheles.

Oh, as for me, I easily can pass ;
 My friend here was a worshipper of kings,
 And will not like perhaps to sit astride
 That mighty monarch's shoulders ; but I see
 No other place for him in your well-crammed boat.

King.

What ! that old brawny fellow sit on me !

Hangman.

Be silent, friend, or you shall taste this cat ;
 Loaded with nine tails, that will make you smart.

Charon.

I really don't see how the man can cross.
 Hilloa, are you dumb ?

Mephistopheles.

He's paralysed with fear.

Charon.

Well then we'll keel-haul him across ; there is
No other way.

Mephistopheles.

No, Charon, that won't do ;
Keel-haul this priest,—the fellow's greasy paunch
Usurps the place of two, and this my friend
Was in his time a very noted man,
And even in death more worthy than this guts.

Charon.

Your lordship's wish is mine ; the priest is gone—
I've pitched him overboard, and tied him neck
And heels to the helm ; there's space now for your friend.—
But who is here ? What beautiful Shape is this ?

Mephistopheles.

This is the Spirit of his earliest love,
Whom he forgot, despised, and wronged, but who
Comes even now from Heaven to plead for him.
We'll have a merry trial, Master Charon.
See, she is there already—the grim Judge
Grows genial in her presence. Row away,
We have no time to lose. How very bad
This river smells—our priest has made it worse.

Charon.

The fellow will look sulky by the time
We get to shore.

Mephistopheles.

But where's your pretty troop
Of choristers, who warble from the slime
Of Styx ?—I mean the frogs.

Charon.

Oop ! oop ! oop ! oop !

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !
Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !
O Father Charon ! to your call
Your children come, and croak and squall ;
We heard your " oop " in the innermost marsh,
And here we are with our screamings harsh.

Coäx ! coäx !

Swimming in millions round your boat,
Each in his speckled brown great coat ;
With lantern jaws, and shining eyes,
And purse-like mouth that gapes for flies.

Coäx ! coäx !

Mephistopheles.

O musical children of the lake,
Ye speak as if 'twere an angel spake.
Come, let me rub your beautiful backs,
As soft as velvet, or the rose
Of light that in purple Pæstum glows ;—
Oh, once again your warblings wake !

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !
Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Charon.

"The strain, methinks is smooth as flax.

Mephistopheles.

Talk of the Cherubim that play
Their harps in heaven's symposiacs,
They never poured forth such a lovely lay.

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Mephistopheles.

Prate of Apollo's enchanting lute,
"The booby who did were an ass-eared brute ;
Its notes compared with these were clacks.

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Mephistopheles.

Orpheus was skilled in the harp, 'tis true,
"The minstrel had three or four knowing knacks,
But he never could wake such hymns as *you*.

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Mephistopheles.

"The lyre of David was certainly sweet,
And preserved King Saul from the fiend's attacks,
But it never gave *me* such an exquisite treat.

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Our voices are exquisite, soft and clear,
Our songs are melody—these are facts :
To Phœbus, the Nine, and the' Seraphim dear—
Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

King.

This horrible croaking makes me sick.

Hangman.

If you whine any more, you shall feel some whacks
Of my nine-tailed cat, take *that*, my chick.

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Ballad-writer.

Good Gods ! I never heard noise like this ;
'Tis worse than a drake's discordant quacks.

Mephistopheles.

'Tis sweeter than airs from the Land of Bliss.

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Mephistopheles.

Ah, me ! the beautiful beasts are going ;
Won't they swim to these billowy tracks ?—
Back to their marshes see them rowing.

Frogs.

Brekekekex ! coäx ! coäx !

Mephistopheles.

Yonder beside that Gate yclothed in white,
 You see the primal Father of Mankind,
 A venerable Shade before whose throne,
 The souls of all that pass from Earth appear,
 Ere they select the path to right or left,
 Which opens when they cross the River of Death.
 When he beholds the evil in their darkness,
 He turns his eyes away : *Ah ! sinful soul,
 Thou hast departed from an evil body.*
 But when the pearly shining pure appear,
 His eyes are lit with rapture, and he cries,
O happy spirit from a blessèd form.
 Thus he rejoices ever in the good
 Sprung from his loins ; but o'er the sons of sin
 He weeps with true parental tenderness,
 As I do over you my dearest child !

Spirits (from the River).

Mercy, Gods, forgiveness, pity,
 Unto us who writhe and shiver
 Buried in this noisome river,
 Dark and deep and fiery-burning,
 Rolling in its waves of flame,
 That our secret sins proclaim :—
 Still we sigh for that Blest City,
 From its shores our spirits spurning.—
 Mercy, Gods, forgiveness, pity.

The Avenging Angel.

Ye are doomed and damned for ever !
 Dare ye hope to reach that City

Where the pure and sunny-hearted
Only enter? Never—never!

Voices (on the River.)

Mercy, Gods, forgiveness, pity,
Unto us who float in terror
On this river's frightful mirror;
Where we read, in lightning written,
The black pictures of our vices,
Till we groan with anguish smitten.
Still we look to yon blest City,
Which in rainbow grandeur rises,
Where our souls may never dwell.
Mercy, Gods, forgiveness, pity!

The Abenging Angel.

Ye are doomed and damned for ever,
Weavers of deep schemes, and artists
Of deceits and frauds and ruins.
Lo!—while tossed upon these waters,
Black and deadly as the plottings
Which in life employed your spirits,
Ye behold the horrid symbols
Of that wickedness so fearful,
Which seemed then all clean and honest.
Dare ye hope to reach that City,
Where the crystal-hearted only
Knock and enter?—Never—never!

Voices.

Mercy, Gods, forgiveness, pity,
Tortured phantoms of these waters,
Oh, condemn us not for ever.

The Sinking Angel.

Ye are Hell's own sons and daughters,
 Exiled from that Holy City
 By your crimes—Hope—never, never !

HYMN OF THE LOST SPIRITS OF THE DEAD.

Pilgrims of life are we !
 We have trodden our toilsome path through tears,
 We have walked amid thorns and flowers ;
 We have lived in a world of hopes and fears,
 Bleak wilds and beautiful bowers.
 Misery, oh, misery !
 Impassioned desires and dreams,
 And the paradise-glimpses of bliss,
 Were ours, for an instant ours ;
 Who thought of no night like this.
 But they faded away like the fabled streams
 Of the desert, and mocked us with falsest gleams ;
 And we woke to wander thus hand and hand
 In the Still and Shadowy Land.

Misery, oh, misery !
 Sorrowing Pilgrims of Life are we,
 Who flit by this gloomy shore,
 Despairing like one on a boundless sea,
 Without helm, or sail, or oar.
 Darkness, cloud, and terror
 Still hang o'er these solemn isles,
 On whose misty coasts the gliding ghosts
 Still dream of the past and gone,
 Dreaming and dreaming on,
 In a night that sees no day,

To illumine its horror with smiles.
 But is darkness still always.
 Ever we wander,
 Ever we ponder,
 Cursing the madness that tempted astray-
 No sunlight to gladden our eyes,
 No rose to delight with its breath ;
 No lute to wake with its silver sighs
 The thoughts that are lulled by death.
 Misery, oh, misery !
 Sunshine, and garden, and dulcet strain,
 Oh, shall ye never be ours again ?
 Sparkling goblet and violet band,
 Smile ye not here in the Shadowy Land ?

No ; Beauty and Bliss have fled
 From the Pilgrims of Life, alas !
 Like the shapes in a wizard's glass,
 O'er the cold hard souls of the Dead,
 Bright thoughts of their bygone pleasures pass ;
 Till Despair effaces
 The rosy traces,
 As lightning withers the vernal grass ;
 And sorrow and darkness reign
 In our silent souls for ever,
 That wildly desire to regain
 What the Destinies yield them never.
 And we wander about, like accursed and banned,
 In the Dark and Silent Land !

Pilgrims of Life are we,
 But sons of Eternal Night ;

The Future that looms in the distance afar
 Of remotest times and ages opes
 No heavenly vista of cheering hopes,
That a day may come when the stain and blight
 That darken us now, oh, misery !
May vanish, and each shine out like the Star
 Of Morning washed in the emerald sea.
 No—no,
 Woe ! woe !
 We are Despair's
 Unhoping heirs ;
 Souls of the Dead for ever lost,
 On our own anguish tempest-tossed,
Cursing the ever existing flames
 Of God's great essence that glow within,
Bearing wherever we go hot Shame's
 Deep-set brands as the Sons of Sin.
 Oh—oh,
 Woe ! woe !
 Ever and ever we wander wailing,
 Such is the just Divine Command ;
Grief for the Past is unavailing,
 When we are once in the Shadowy Land.

Mephistopheles.

This river Styx is like the Thames at London,
That every days grows dirtier and more stinking.
Quick, Charon—lose no time—row quick, and quicker,
I feel inclined to faint, my pulse is sinking.
Oh, that I had a flask of strongest liquor,
Such as they sell at Auerbach's in Liepsic,
Which many a time has saved me from being gripe-sick.

Row on, you rogue.—Why, Charon, you seem thinking,
Rapt in a reverie—a thing uncommon
In one of your hard nerves.

Charon.

I don't deny it.

Do you remember to have seen a Phantom,
Lovely and young, beside the river weeping,
As we put off from shore?

Mephistopheles.

I recollect her,

She seemed a very charming sort of Spectre ;
She sought the boat, and for a time stood by it,
But did not enter.

Charon.

Does your Highness know her?

Mephistopheles.

I cannot say I do ; she moved me greatly,
A thing that's rarely done by any woman.
Seldom indeed I've seen such sweet eyes steeping
Their starry light in tears that spake more sadness.
Deep must have been the grief could thus affect her.

Ballad-writer.

I think I know the story of her madness.

Charon.

Do you, Sir Minstrel ?—tell it.

Ballad-writer.

Sir, with pleasure,

'Twill entertain us on our gloomy voyage ;
And yet it is tale of truth and sorrow

Might make the stoniest-hearted melt in pity ;
 For she was stung to death by a base viper,
 Whose name—be it anathema—was Jerdan.

Charon.

Out with it, quick—we want no further prologue ;
 And if it pleases me, I'll speak to Minos
 To overlook the fact that you're a Poet ;
 For that alone in these discerning regions
 Is proof conclusive that you are a knave,
 And well deserve damnation sevenfold.

Ballad-writer.

Nay, sir, but why condemn all poets thus ?
 Poets are God's interpreters on earth.
 They soar aloft, as if on angels' wings,
 They bring us tidings of eternal things ;
 They mould our souls to beauty, goodness, truth,
 And train them for their new ethereal birth
 In that star-world where dwells unfading youth.
 Dreamers of dreams-divine, and pictured scenes
 Of heroes, love, the knightly sword, the lance,
 Sports in the greenwood, faërie, ladies fair,
 Enchantment, sylvans ; all that Queen Romance,
 In olden tomes of legends rich and rare,
 With rainbow pencils paints, the Poet gleans.
 Whate'er with skilful hand the Bard portrays,
 Forth like quick life, the perfect pictures stand—
 Genius, that gifts and guides his well-trained hand,
 In all her splendid hues each scene arrays.
 Angels themselves attend his high career,
 Prompting him ever thus.—Awake, arise !

Evoke the voice of song, that sleeping lies
 In the gold lute, and charm heart, spirit, soul, and ear.

Charon.

Do they indeed? I never knew an instance;
 You'll find it rather hard to humbug Minos.
 He hates all poets, as they say the Devil
 Hates holy water—nathelless I'll befriend you,
 And save you from some years of Purgatory,
 Provided what you tell is worth the hearing.

Mephistopheles.

Nay, we can't have this nonsense, 'twere a bore
 As bad as Druso's, that rich stupid scribbler,
 Who forced his debtors, when they could not pay him,
 To hear and praise his tedious compositions.

Charon.

Pardon me, my good lord, the way is long,
 The journey melancholy, and this fool
 Will joyously buffoon the weary hour,
 Provoking laughter at himself or theme.

Ballad-writer.

Most humbly, sir, I thank you for your kindness,
 And thus commence the Story of the Ladye,
 Whose name was no true omen of her life.

THE STORY OF THE LADYE.

There late lived One, a fair and wondrous creature,
 A being all enchantment, from whose soul
 Flashed such a beam as lighted up each feature

With mind's pure essence ; like the stars that roll
 Over the heaven when the solemn stole
 Of night hath wrapped it. She was young and fair,
 And in her heart, like some white virgin-scroll,
 Dwelt nymphal Innocence ; and still where'er
 She turned Delight was near, and round her, like the air.

'Twas said the Muses danced about her cradle,
 And played on their gold harps their sweetest lays ;
 Apollo fed her from a diamond ladle,
 While Love stood by, and fixed his rosy gaze
 Right on the Infant slumbering in the blaze
 Of glittering sunshine and Hymettian flowers ;
 And, oh, be mine the welcome task, he says,
 To watch and tend this crescent born for hours
 Of love, and innocent joy, and blest Idalian bowers.

Venus herself came down from heaven, and brought her
 The charm-conferring cestus that she wore ;
 And take, she says, this magic gift, my daughter ;
 Take it, and all who see thee shall adore ;
 The sleeper's marble limbs she bound it o'er,
 Till, like a sunbeam in a shady place,
 Or Hesper imaged on the glassy floor
 Of the broad ocean, when the sky's embrace
 Hath veiled the Moon, appeared the Infant's form and face.

The Mountain-nymphs, the Fauns and Dryades,
 Zoneless and golden-sandalled, and rose-crowned,
 The blue-eyed train of Thetis from the seas,
 The white-armed Naiads, with their locks unbound
 And rustling in the Zephyrs, flocked around ;
 And silver-shafted Dian from the plains

And leafy valleys where the streams resound
Brought her bright nymphs—those beauty breathing
trains,
While sweet Euterpè played, and Phœbus sang his strains.

And flower-encinctured Dreams, and Visions golden,
With stars for eyes, and lips more red than rose,
Such as from high Olympus to the olden
And god-like Poets, wandered to disclose
The thought divine, whose burning splendour glows
Still in their songs ; all these were there, beside
The woodland bed whereon, in soft repose,
Reclined this favoured babe, her thoughts to guide
Up to the heavenly homes to which she was allied.

Beside her stood the snowy-bosomed Graces,
With arms enwreathed, and smiled upon her sleep ;
While Faunus made a thousand gay grimaces,
And wild with mirthfulness was seen to leap.
Meanwhile the Infant on a fragrant heap
Of violets, roses, and green eglantine,
Slumbered as in some dream radiant and deep,
And ever and anon, like sweet sunshine,
A laugh lit up her face, which seemed indeed divine.

And light-winged birds, and humming honey-bees,
And wandering echoes catching all sweet sounds ;
And flowers and fruits are there, and emerald trees,
Olive and myrtle on their grassy mounds ;
A babbling stream from rock to rock that bounds
Making delicious music in its way ;
An atmosphere like perfume, that surrounds

This sacred spot ; an ever-living ray
Of heavenly light dwells there, and changes night to day.

Thus passed her infancy, 'mid happy scenes,
Companionship divine, and sweet delight ;
Year rolls on year, and girlhood intervenes ;
And then the Woman steps serene and bright
Forth to the world, nor dreams of aught to blight
The blissful visions that her youth beheld :
A voice came down from heaven—Belovèd, write
The things that thou hast seen and known of eld ;—
Then proudly flashed her eye ; her beauteous bosom
swelled.

And then she did obey the great behest,—
This heaven-eyed Ladye touched her sounding lyre ;
Songs flow like sunbeams from her throbbing breast,
While her looks glisten with celestial fire ;
Lo ! with what ecstasy her tones inspire
The hearts of old and young ; how sweetly fall
The swanlike harmonies that never tire,
The breathing words and burning thoughts that all
Who stand within their spell, like magic straight enthrall.

Her soul was Music's temple ; it was filled
With all ethereal, all enchanting lore,
With dazzling thoughts and pure, as if distilled
From morning sunshine : still and evermore
Her spirit mused on deeds and days of yore ;
Goodness and gentleness their starry veil
Of brightness round her threw ; like golden ore
Her eloquent discourse, or like the gale

That blows o'er groves of spice, and bids their sweets
exhale.

And to this soul was given a fairy form,
Fawnlike in lightness ! fawnlike were her eyes ;
A beauteous rainbow shining in a storm ;
A star that glitters in tempestuous skies
Could scarcely win more wonder and surprise
Than this fair Woman in a stormy world,
Still in her own pure radiance ; Frauds and Lies
Came forth like toads, and their vile venom hurled,
Still like a Star she shone, with light undimmed, unfurled.

The faërie-dreaming Painter, from whose hand
Falls splendour, poesy, and breath, and thought,
The Bright, Sublime, the Beautiful, the Grand,
Into his canvass like quick life enwrought,
Came, and unto her shrine his offering brought ;
The Scholar skilled in many an ancient tongue
With reverent feet her classic altar sought ;
The Northern Minstrel his wild garland hung
Above her head, and wept, while sadly still she sung.

And hers were songs of other scenes and lands—
The Golden Violet, the Chivalric Vow,
Proud knights, and frowning forts, and armoured bands,
And kings and empires, all departed now ;
Till Glory came, and o'er her laurelled brow
Shed rays immortal ; and the wondering throng,
The Wise, the Virtuous, and the Great that bow
Before the priestess of so sweet a song
Her praises, like wild echoes, still and still prolong.

And love was in her hymns, undying love,
 Spirit and heart-absorbing, passionate, wild ;
Such as Immortals feel in realms above,
 Such as on earth, alas ! but seldom smiled.
 In dreams like these her lone hours she beguiled ;
For sorrow dwelt within her soul, and when
 Her laugh, like the clear laughter of a child,
Was loudest and most silvery, even then
A cloud came o'er her thoughts, and made her weep again.

Much had she struggled from her ripening years,
 With the cold world and worldly wants and cares ;
Her path to fame had been a path through tears,
 The flowers that round her grew were choked with tares :
 But Genius never falters or despairs ;
But like a King wends onward in its march ;
 Immortal lightnings in its hand it bears,
Seas that oppose, or deserts wild that parch,
It braves, and wins at length triumphal bust and arch.

And it was so with her ; the world that first
 Hailed her with welcome, and delight, and praise,
Now frowned upon her ; like hot thunder burst
 Its angry voice, while sadness and amaze
 Consumed that heaven-eyed Ladye many days ;
Her soul, her clear bright soul, must never more
 Shine out in all its primal strength and blaze ;
Never again shall pass from her heart's core
The vulture Grief that now her inmost vitals tore.

For there was one on whom that Ladye's smile
 Of innocence had fallen. O wretch accurst

Of God and Man ; hell-doomed—thou viper vile,
 Spawned from foul poison, on foul poison nurs't !
 The chasms of hell that for thy carcass thirst
 Never before received, nor ever again,
 Shall they receive within them, since their first
 Pale, cowardly tenant, murder-spotted Cain,
 A baser, bloodier wretch—well matched the miscreant
 twain.

With glozing tongue, true copy of Iscariot,
 This lewd and cogging villain, like a fiend
 Whispered away her fame ; on foot, in chariot,
 On wingèd steed, the festering falsehood gleaned
 From his foul lips and heart, with lies obscen'd,
 Rushed through the multitude, from one to one,
 And thence to thousands ; at its outset screened
 In secresy; and seeming light to shun,
 It grew apace, and then—the heaven-eyed was undone.

Oh, weep ! oh, weep ! the sharp envenomed shaft
 Of vilest slander hath been foully shot :
 A wound whereat the very devils laughed,
 To see their latest child in hell begot
 So deftly weave and wind his fiendlike plot ;
 The caves of Erebus resound with glee ;
 The triple-headed Dog to bark forgot,
 And thought a pleasant thought in his heads three :
 This is a man indeed after mine heart, quoth he.

Oh, weep ! oh, weep ! oh, what a wound was there !
 The graceful, glorious creature sits and weeps ;
 Ah me ! that grief should torture one so fair ;

She hath sown beauty, blight and death she reaps :
 She sits alone and lonely ; Sorrow steeps
 Her spirit-lighted eyes in briny tears ;
 Her breaking heart its maddened vigil keeps :—
 This honest world believes whate'er it hears,
 Except the truth ; it hails the lie that blasts and sears.

Her heart is broken—time and tide move on ;
 The slander lives, the slanderer is gay ;
 Pining alone still sits that weeping one,
 Her heart is broken now ; to dust and clay
 All her bright hopes are turned ; her hair is gray :
 Oh, weep ! oh, weep ! sweet Heaven, to see thine own
 Thus done to death by boasts and lies that slay ;
 All her fair hopes to madness turned or flown,
 Her rose-like beauty crushed ere it was fully blown.

Where are her gentle dreamings ? gone for ever !
 Her innocent hopes and wishes ? gone, all gone !
 A rainbow imaged on a crystal river
 Was not more frail—it shines—and now *has* shone.
 Present and Past seem blended into one,
 So quickly faded happiness away :
 Such is thy life, poor walking skeleton
 That callest thyself Man. Alas the day !
 And thou wilt smile, and wed, and war, and kill, and sway.

And years roll on, and she hath given her hand
 To one who wooed her ; but no heart she gave ;
 Her heart was dead within her ; her own land
 She leaves, and o'er the dark and boiling wave,
 To where Lionè's crags the ocean brave,

The heaven-eyed Ladye goes—three short months pass,
 And she is sleeping in her lonely grave ;
 And there are tales abroad—the poisoned glass,
 And wild revenge, and hate, and scorn, and death—alas !

She sleeps on Afric's shore ; the purple billow
 Dashes its crest beneath her silent tomb ;
 And the bright stars smile o'er her earthly pillow ;
 But no fresh flowers about her bud or bloom ;
 No rose from her own land sheds sweet perfume
 Over her mouldering beauty ; all is bare,
 Arid, and tinged with some funereal gloom,
 Like her own dark career of grief and care ;—
 Sad fate reserv'd for one so innocent and fair.

The wandering night winds o'er her head that blow
 Make mournful music like a spirit's wail ;
 Alas ! to the bright heart that sleeps below
 How little can such requiem avail !
 Many have wept who hear her tragic tale,
 And thousands yet unborn for her will weep :
 The eyes drop tears, the cheek grows ashy pale,
 And icy shudderings o'er the spirit creep—
 Who sent her beaming youth to its eternal sleep ?

Thou, Murderer, 'twas thine envenomed lips ;—
Thou by thy villainous falsehoods didst the deed ;
 To *thee* we owe this beauteous star's eclipse ;
 'Twas *thou* who mad'st her heart and spirit bleed ;
 Suffer for it thou shalt, thou and thy seed,
 Unto all generations ; like red flame
 The memory of the Dead shall leap and feed

About thy slanderous spirit, and thy name
Become to after-times the synonyme of Shame.

O thou Eternal God, in thunder throned,
Look down from heaven, and with thy vengeful wrath
Pursue this leprous villain—cursed, disowned,

 And howling let him die ; make smooth his path
 To flame eternal ; if he daughters hath,
Let Infamy and Want sit by them ever !

 Plunge them accursed into the fiery bath
Prepared for Satan and their sire ; and sever
Their triple serpent-spirits never, never, never.

SCENE XIII.

THE POET'S PARADISE.

CHATTERTON *under a beautiful tree, playing on a golden lyre and singing.*

I dreamed a dream
As fair—as bright—
As the star's soft gleam,
Or eyes of light.
At the midnight hour
The Queen of Love,
From her faërie bower
Of smiles above,
With Cupid came,
And with grace divine
Kissed me, and whispered,
“Henceforth be thine
This little child
Whom I bring thee here,
A willing pupil
To minstrels dear.
Teach him to sing
The strains thou hast sung;
Like a bird of spring
O'er its callow young.”
She vanished in light,—
That witching one,—
Like a meteor of night,
That shines and is gone.

The Sprite of the skies
Remained by me,
His deep blue eyes
Radiant with glee.
His looks were bright
As roses wreathèd
A wild delight
From his features breathèd.
Legends I taught him
Of nymph and swain ;
Of hearts entangled
In love's sweet chain.
Fables that charm
The soul from sadness ;
Stories that warm
The coldest to gladness ;
Songs all glowing
With passion and mirth,
Like music flowing
From heaven to earth.
Such were the treasures
Of wit and thought
I gave : yet dreamed not
My task was nought.
Cupid listened,
And clapped his hands,
And his wild eyes glistened
Like burning brands.
Fanning the air
With snow-white wings,
He seized my lyre,
He swept the strings :

He looked, he glittered,
Like golden morn,
As he chaunted the loves
Of the heaven-born.
His voice was sweet
And perfume-laden,
And light as the feet
Of dancing maiden.—
“Hearts there are
In Heaven above
Of wild desires,
Of passionate love.
Hearts there are
Divinest of mould,
Which Love hath among
His slaves enrolled ;
Love hath been,
And ever will be :
The might of Heaven
Shall fade ere he.”
Then the Boy
Nearer advancing,
The Spirit of Joy
In his blue eyes dancing,
Told me such secrets
Of Heaven as ne'er
Were before revealed
But to poet's ear ;
Revealings of beauty,
That make the soul
Like the stars, that on wings
Of diamond roll.

In song—in splendour,
 The god departed ;
 The spell was o'er,
 From sleep I started.
 Thoughts like sunbeams
 Around me hung,
 And my heart still echoed
 What Love had sung.
 Oh ! what could Heaven
 Deny to us,
 To whom it hath given
 Its secrets thus ?

Pausing.

Well, I think Minos was extremely just.
 The Devil's Advocate was too severe ;
 He pressed the case as if he were Attorney
 For Hell, and not for Truth. The Judge said well ;
 " Man's life is to be judged
 Not by his deeds alone,
 But by the circumstances, times, and seasons
 Which do accompany those deeds.
 Nor should we contemplate it but in halves,
 But as a whole, a great and wondrous whole ;
 Contrasting light with dark,
 As in some picture old,
 And gathering thence sound knowledge of the entire."

Aristophanes.

Why, my bold youngker, do I find *you* musing ?
 What mighty speculation moves your thoughts ?
 Tell, if 'tis not a secret,

Chatterton.

Ah ! my Grecian,
 With the three lovely Graces in your bosom,
 You are almost the only Spirit here
 I should have cared to meet just now, except
 That madcap wag of Meudon ; such a trial
 As I have witnessed seldom's seen in Hell.

Aristophanes.

A trial !—before Minos, I suppose ?

Chatterton.

Minos was judge ; the culprit an old poet
 Of whom we've heard so much from German critics,
 Who swear in hendecasyllabic oaths,
 Thunder and Lightnings, Heaven, and Earth, and Hades,
 He was the greatest wit the earth e'er saw,
 Forgetting Rabelais, Swift, yourself, and me,
 Cervantes, Butler, Fielding, and Voltaire.

Aristophanes.

This must have been their clay eiddlon, Goethe,
 Whose fanatic worshippers have split our ears
 For the last forty years with senseless praise
 Of what was commonplace, obscure, and stale ;
 Prepared to prove by fists, and cuffs, and clubs,
 Since Homer stole his plot from old Corinnus,
 The earliest minstrel of the Trojan War,
 This Frankfort rhymmer was earth's greatest son.

Chatterton.

The same,—We've all indeed been sadly bored
 With eulogics on him, as once we were

With goose Du Bartas, surnamed the Divine,
 Cowper, the mad translator, Aretino,
 Boileau, Phil. Sydney, admirable Crichton,
 And creatures of that class, who had their day
 On earth, but who, to ears polite and witty,
 Are never mentioned now, except in jest.

Aristophanes.

What was this trial that amused you so ?

Chatterton.

Come, sit with me beneath this golden vine,
 Clustered all o'er with purple grapes, that bring
 To memory Attica's delicious suns
 And landscapes rife with beauty, music, love,
 And pastoral life ; thus, while we breathe at ease
 The Elysian atmosphere of rosy light,
 Melody, fragrance, bliss, and splendour blent,
 I'll tell you (if I do not change my mind)
 All that I saw of this new comedy.

Aristophanes.

'Twill pass a pleasant hour away ; content
 Sit you beneath the vine, while I stretch here
 Upon this mossy bank with violets starred.

Chatterton.

So many years have passed since last I saw
 Charon and Styx, that in a merry mood
 To-day I ventured through the black Abyss
 Of fire and mist that separates this place
 From Tartarus. The several dangers past,

I stood at last upon the river's brink,
Where gaped a multitude of expectant souls
Waiting to see the new arrivals land.

Aristophanes.

Man still is man, wherever he may be,
The same strange motley and inquisitive fool.

Chatterton.

When the boat came it bore a curious group
All naked ; nothing could I learn of those
Who filled it, whether kings, or slaves, or knaves.

Aristophanes.

Waste not your breath ; the last comprises both.

Chatterton.

But there were two who struck me very much :
One was that devil, Mephistopheles,
The merriest, bitterest, most outspoken Elf
I've ever passed an hour with.

Aristophanes.

Was he there ?

I wish you had brought him hither ; 'tis an age
Since I've conversed with one that pleased me more.

Chatterton.

I could not tempt him to these classic quarters :
He had important business with the Shade
Of Goethe, who accompanied him from earth.

Aristophanes.

Ho !—ho !—I see ; these were the two new comers,
By whom you were attracted from the first.

Chatterton.

They were. Mephisto, calling me aside,
 Told me to slip into the crowd, and pass
 Unnoticed into court, where I should hear
 A very curious trial :—Goethe prisoner,
 The Devil's Advocate accuser, and
 A certain Lady counsel for the accused.
 I mingled with the crowd, and by the aid
 Of Mephistopheles stole in ; and there,
 Beside the Judge, radiant in heavenly light
 That far outshone the diamond's blinding blaze,
 Stood One, whose beauty was a Paradise
 Of all and every thing that bears the form
 And soul of splendour, loveliness, and youth :
 I'll not describe her—even *you* would fail ;
 Not all the roses that you ever spoke
 Could equal her in freshness, light, or charm.

The comedy began : Stern Minos rose,
 And in ten minutes sentenced some ten thousand
 To several torments : only one proved pure,
 A Ballad-writer, whom they starved on earth,
 As they did me in Brook Street, near Gray's Inn ;
 And him they sent to the Fields of Asphodel,
 With fair Letitia Landon, whom he loved.
 Then Goethe was brought up. The Advocate,
 A small thin devil, with a sharp shrewd brow
 A sensual mouth, hyena's eyes and laugh,
 That seemed to chuckle with contempt of God,
 Rose up, and saddling on his short cocked nose
 A pair of spectacles, and sneering much,

Laid Jack's life bare ; recounted all his deeds,
Committed and omitted : such a list
Of accusations has not been delivered
'Gainst any man of literary note
Since Chancellor Bacon or since James the First
Was damned ; 'twas such as poet's seldom have
To answer ; selfishness extreme, disdain
Of all things human, save the few that tended
To his own pleasures : Men, the Devil said,
Should be like stars whose beams illumine each other
But this man's whole existence from his birth
Had centred only in his worshipped self.
His life, if marble smooth, was marble cold ;
His songs were rhyme, but in their moral bad ;
His maxims were made up of farce and hate.
His cold flirtations and sere heartlessness
To women were unveiled, and vain confessions
Of the frail many who believed his vows.
Gretchen, Annette, Lucinda, Frederica,
Emily, Charlotte, Lilli ; a fair list,
As long as Leporello's in the play,
Of women duped, and then held up to laughter,
In that great heap of lies ycleped his Life.
And when he might have served the human race
He would not, but preferred to pass his time
Musing on carrots, analysing dungs,
Playing the lacquey and the lickspit to
The paltry court of Weimar and its Log.

Aristophanes.

What followed ?

Chatterton.

This—the Poet was reprieved.

Aristophanes.

Reprieved?—how mean you? Was there no defence?

Chatterton.

Oh, yes, a very splendid speech by Gretchen ;—
One of the women whom the fellow fooled.
And a most Minos-like amazing judgment,
Which I forget—

Aristophanes.

Nay, you are jesting with me.

Chatterton.

Of course I am—the whole thing is a jest ;
It came to me through Virgil's ivory gate.
And if I am not owl-eyed, there is Virgil
Reclining yonder by the sparkling waters.
If you desire to hear the rest, why, faith,
You'll have to run for it, dear Aristophanes.

SCENE XIV.

THE COURT-YARD.

An open space in front of the Judgment-Seat of MINOS.

Evil Spirit.

Villain, Knave, Dolt, Rascal, Monkey !

Devil's Advocate.

How now ?—how now, gentle Nunky ?

Evil Spirit.

Scoundrel, Duffer, Ruffian, Booby !

Devil's Advocate.

Spoil not those ripe lips of ruby.

Evil Spirit.

Dunghill, Coward, Dunce, Rascallion.

Devil's Advocate.

Why, you're rampant as a stallion.

Evil Spirit.

Vagabond, Beast, Goose, and Blackguard !

Devil's Advocate.

Truly, lad, you *do* attack hard.

Evil Spirit.

Atheist, Sot, Thief, Jew, Turk, Papist !

Devil's Advocate.

Why, you'll call me soon Red-tapist,

Evil Spirit.

Blunderer, Liar, Jolt-head, Bully !

Devil's Advocate.

Nay, have done, you crippled Cully.

Evil Spirit.

Traitor, Clown, Scamp, Craven, Pig-head !

Devil's Advocate.

I shall have to punch your thick head.

Evil Spirit.

Own that you're a Rogue as shabby—

Devil's Advocate.

As there's in Westminster Abbey ?

Evil Spirit.

Cutpurse, Sloven, Drunkard, Brawler !

Devil's Advocate.

Will none stop this Caterwauler ?

Evil Spirit.

Mountebank, Cheat, Carrion, Vermin !

Devil's Advocate.

Here's respect to robe and ermine.

Evil Spirit.

Hypocrite, Bullbeggar, Schemer !

Devil's Advocate.

Gad, your tongue wags like a steamer.

Evil Spirit.

Cadger, Churl, Buffoon, Quack, Felon !

Devil's Advocate.

All my choicest virtues tell on.

Evil Spirit.

Lunatic, Rat, Mooncalf, Noodle !

Devil's Advocate.

Cockadoodle ! doodle ! doodle !

Evil Spirit.

Wretch ! I'll grind your soul to powder.

Devil's Advocate.

If you do, you'll bawl no louder.

Evil Spirit.

Then I'll thrust you into blazes.

Devil's Advocate.

Well—I'd like to know its mazes.

Evil Spirit.

I will crucify you, Gabbler !

Devil's Advocate.

I will hang you up, old Babbler !

Evil Spirit.

Let me near him,—I will thrash him.

Devil's Advocate.

Friends, hands off,—I want to smash him.

Evil Spirit.

Clodpole, Oaf, Grub, Ragamuffin!

Devil's Advocate.

Ne'er knew I you had such stuff in.

Evil Spirit.

Pig-face, Driveller, Sneak, Imbecile!

Devil's Advocate.

Now you're gravelled—now you guess ill.

Evil Spirit.

Idiot, Lickplate, Jack-a-dandy!

Devil's Advocate.

Names as sweet as sugar-candy.

Evil Spirit.

Diddler, Swindler, Blackleg, Blockhead!

Devil's Advocate.

Save us from your tongue's foul pocket.

Evil Spirit.

Dunderhead, Botch, Jail-bird, Scarecrow!

Devil's Advocate.

Worse did cock on dunghill ne'er crow.

Evil Spirit.

What induced you thus to flounder?

Devil's Advocate.

Now your wisdom 'gins to founder.

Evil Spirit.

Is he not reprieved, vile Caitiff?

Devil's Advocate.

Yes, he is, of Hades native.

Evil Spirit.

Was it not *your* stupid 'peaching?

Devil's Advocate.

No—'twas Peg's confounded screeching.

Evil Spirit.

Get away to Hell, you Ninny.

Devil's Advocate.

And the same to you, my Hinnie.

SCENE XV.

THE HALLS OF MINOS.

Gretchen.

Alas, sweet hours,
Sweet olden hours,
For ever and ever
Farewell, sweet hours.

And thou, fond vision
Of love and light,
Art quenched in gloom,
And all is night.

In earth's dim moments,
In heaven's pure zone,
My dream of sweetness
For ever flown.

Like a star in tempest,
A smile in grief,
A tear in rapture,
That one belief.

Alas, sweet hours,
Sweet olden hours,
For ever and ever,
Farewell, sweet hours.

My heart a harp
Of love and gladness ;

The strings are broken,
All is sadness.

My heart a harp
Of silver song ;—
The harp is shattered
Long and long.

Alas, sweet hours,
Sweet olden hours,
For ever and ever
Farewell, sweet hours.

My soul is a-weary,
Dark with woe ;
My wild thoughts wander
To and fro.

My eyes are streaming
Full with tears ;
And art thou gone,
Dear dream of years ?

And art thou vanished,
Thou mine own ?
And am I for ever
Left alone ?

Alas, sweet hours,
Sweet olden hours,
For ever and ever
Farewell, sweet hours.

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II. SCENE I.

THE RIVER LETHE.

Mephistopheles.

Baffled, duped, tricked, deceived, outwitted, swindled.—
 By snow-browed Morning, by immortal Day,
 And by the boundless Air that clasps the earth
 Within its dewy arms; by Hecat' gray,
 By Cerberus the eternal foe to Mirth,
 I swear I am a most ingenious Devil;
 My master should reduce me to the level
 Of lowest Imp who masque as tabbies brindled,
 And deal with only aged women and witches;
 What!—can it be that I who had fresh kindled
 The prettiest fire for this old Wag of Weimar,
 And almost felt his twinges, aches, and twitches,
 When put down fresh upon the broiling coals,
 Should now be laughed at by all waggish drolls
 Who see me schemed by a Parnassian chimer,
 Skilful in prating, powerless in speaking;
 And a sly thing from t'other side, who pitches
 Such heaps of nonsense into Justice Minos
 (Now grown as silly as the ass-eared judge);
 The doting fool is flattered by the fudge,
 And with those sprites to curry favour seeking,
 Declares forsooth, the sentence is postponed?
 What could Zeus mean, when he would thus assign us
 A magistrate who should have been dethroned?
 The thing is monstrous—I protest against it;

It is a shame—a desperate shocking scandal
 Upon all truth and justice.—Goth or Vandal
 Never pronounced such nonsense, or dispensed it
 In form of law. Postponed! For what? Or why?
 For whom? To when? How? What is the reply?
 Why this—*it is his will*;—and we must bow;
 And then he turns us out of court, and calls
 Some other ghosts before his worshipped brow,
 Looking like mustard, or like pungent sauce,
 Or cayenne pepper, at his *pia fraus*,
 And damns them all, despite their squeals and squalls.
 How dare he make exception in this case?
 The exception is deceitful, harsh, and base.
 I wonder was he bribed by this mad girl?
 These devilish women will do any folly:—
 Oh! for a flask to drown this melancholy!

I feel inclined to drink a brimming draught
 Of Lethè, and so wash away the bother
 Entirely from my brains; the liquor quaffed
 Von Humbug's free, and I must seek another.
 No—that would prove me stupid, mad, or daft;—
 To lose him now would sully my past glory,
 And offer endless food for fun to chaps,
 Devilkins of the smallest rank in Orcus,
 Who envy me, and would parade this matter
 (As ravens croak against the lordly eagle)
 From east to west, where'er Fame's trumpets clatter;
 Till Satan's rage might prompt him to pitchfork us
 Into some place unknown to charts and maps;
 Where in the thunderbolt's undying flame,
 I should at leisure chew the cud of shame.

I've acted somewhat like that crowned curmudgeon,
 The mighty king of—I forget what nation,
 Who marched with a great armament of soldiers,
 Elephants, camels, horses, princes, lords,
 Into the mountains—merely to take physic,
 Where he might have the benefit of fresh air.
 O fool, O mooncalf, jolthead, dolt, and gudgeon !
 By Satan, I deserve his thickest bludgeon,
 For being thus bamboozled after years
 Of thought, and months of arduous preparation,—
 The unreposing wheels of Vengeance seize me
 If I don't smite this Judge who dares to teaze me.

He's here—I see him coming—sadly, lonely,
 Styx makes amazing changes ; fifty years
 At least have been lopped off since here he came,
 And he looks now as brave and stout as ever
 Man in his summer's prime. I feel ashamed
 Of my base calling, and could hate the hour
 That saw me fall, as I do Him who framed
 This Universe and us, and Him who tempted,
 And all my brethren. Hate, Revenge, fell Hate,
 Are my sole pleasures now : Evil my god ;
 O'erwhelming Vengeance, Scorn, Crime, Fraud, my being.
 By sweet Saint Peter, I could wish 'twere granted,
 To wrap all Nature in a robe of darkness,
 And, armed with fire, to play some eftish tricks
 With men and angels, stars and heaven itself.

Goethe.

O my lost love, my Gretchen ! have I then
 Beheld thee but to lose thee ever more ?
 Reft of thee during life, does Death too part

Our souls which I had fondly hoped were one?
 Yet, no—she comes; her rosy presence fills
 The air with sunshine; from her snowy plumes
 Such splendour is diffused, as when the Star
 Of Morning rises in the twilight dim,
 And beauty flashes from his beaming eyes;
 Sweetly she smiles, yet sadly, like the music
 Of an enslaved old nation, that reveals
 The soul of sorrow in its liveliest songs.

Evil Spirit.

Speak of the devil—they say he is present;
 Speak of a woman—that moment she comes;
 Here flies this silly one—this is unpleasant;
 I must go hide myself, biting my thumbs.
 While she is with him there's Paradise round him,—
 Half of my labour she'll crumble to bits;
 While *we* are near, all his follies confound him,—
 Would she were off to her heavenly chits.

Goethe.

Once more we meet—once more, my own sweet love,
 I feel in soul as in those early hours,
 When wandering blest beside thee, life seemed love,
 And, Margaret, thou wert all the world to me.

Gretchen.

We meet, alas! to part. The moment comes
 Which the Judge gave thee for this sad farewell;
 And the dark Tempter will be here anon
 With myriad plottings to seduce thy soul
 In the strange pilgrimage to thee allotted;—
 Alas! alas! that we should part, and thus!

Goethe.

Nay, do not weep, my soul is now herself ;
Tempt as he may, the Tempter shall not triumph.

Gretchen.

Marked you the madness that suffused his brow
And glowed in his hot eyes, when Minos waved
His golden wand, and the decree postponed
Which, as he hoped, would give thee to his realms ?

Goethe.

I saw it ; Hell methought stood there, not he.
Never before was rage so dire expressed
In aught created ; rage, revenge, and hate,
Orcus itself grew darker as he frowned,
The Manes shuddered, and the Dead fell stricken
With pallid fear, as if that awful trump
That sounds the general judgment, and the end
Of all things had sent forth its piercing blast.—
But what is this strange sentence ? Bodes it good
Or fatal evil ?

Gretchen.

Nay, I cannot know.

Whether it be to fright thy soul with scenes
Of such dread horror as no brain conceives
Till eye hath seen them, and increase thine agony ;
(Would that 'twere mine to bear it for thy sake !)
Or whether the False Tempter hath permission
To mock thee by the wizard arts of Satan,
And try thee further, who can say ?—it may be
That one of these is written, and thy soul
Be spared, and rise triumphant o'er his plottings.

Goethe.

O Gretchen ! would to heaven we ne'er had parted ;
 My soul had drawn such virtuous strength from thine,
 That Vice, though giant-limbed, had failed to bow
 Or break me to his side. That thou and I
 Had dwelt together in some country bourn,
 Under a straw-thatched cottage, rose-entwined,
 And nestling amid trees ; old friends around ;
 A hedge of thyme to tempt the humming bees,
 An orchard purple with autumnal fruits,
 Blue mountains circling us, the sky above,
 Our innocent children prattling at our knees,
 Our hearts all purity, content, and peace,
 Love our sole thought and heaven our final hope.

Gretchen.

But see, the Tempter comes ; a mocking smile
 Lights his dark features and his fiendish eyes ;
 His mighty wings o'ershadow the bright suns
 That shine around us ; black and vast and dense
 As the thick clouds that rush upon the sea,
 Whelming affrighted ships, eclipsing heaven,
 Bearing destruction in their sullen wombs,
 That howl and howl and howl till all is lost.

Goethe.

Farewell—a long farewell : remember me.

Gretchen.

Remember *me* and hope. I fly to heaven
 Prostrate before The Aleim, the heaven itself
 Shall end ere I despair of winning grace.

Goethe.

She's gone—she's gone ! Shall we not meet again ?
O beautiful Spirit of my only love !

Voix (in the distance).

Farewell, dear love ; remember me and hope.

Mephistopheles.

Tis time that we should enter on our journey ;
The way is vast, the regions without number.
And though we travel faster than the earth
Whirls round in space—some seventeen miles a minute—
Yet is it fit to waste no moments here,
Uselessly moaning by this sluggish River.
Confess now, didst not hope these things were myths ?
That Pluto, Zeus, and Hermes all were fables ?
That old Mythology was incongruous fiction ?
That all the ancient poets were smart liars ?
Thou seest it is not so, but all is real.
There is no fantasy in Minstrel's dreams,
They are revealings from the Spheres of Heaven—
Nay, don't be angry with thy red-cloaked friend.

Aside.

This solemn mood of his will never do—
I'll rouse him by some merry antic joke,
To fling aside his philosophic mask.

SCENE II.

DARKNESS.

MEPHISTOPHELES *and* GOETHE.

Goethe.

Is this the Hell of which you spake so much ?

Mephistopheles.

By no means, friend ; the road to Hell is downwards ;
We are ascending a bare mountain gorge.—
I mean to shew you a most dainty spectacle.

Goethe.

With excellent intentions, as you'll swear.

Mephistopheles.

I fear I've missed the way ; hilloa ! hilloa !—
Did you not hear a voice reply to mine ?
Or was it fancy, or a mocking echo ?

Goethe.

I heard a Voice that mocked you much indeed ;
And here comes one who seems its mocking owner.

Mephistopheles.

Who is this fellow ? Surely I should know him.
Hilloa ! you, sir, who are you ? what's your name ?
What do you here ? mousing for moor-hens, eh ? .

Momus.

I once was a god, dwelling high in Olympus,
 My father was Somnus, some say he was Nox,
 I do not care which ; but I grew like a fox,
 Waggish and tricksy, as cunning an imp as
 Ever sang *la, lalla, la, la.*

I laughed at old Juno, I tripped up young Cupid,
 I limped, and made faces at Vulcan the smith,
 I flirted with Venus and nymphs of her kith ;
 I told all the husbands whom Zeus nincompoop-èd
 In masquerade, *la, lalla, la, la.*

I mocked at the house built by Pallas Athenè,
 Because it was not upon wheels to remove,
 When it got among neighbours one could not approve,
 Till the vinegar virgin grew snappish and spleeny,
 And called me a *la, lalla, la, la.*

At last for my truth-telling tongue I was tumbled
 One day from Olympus, and pushed into space ;
 And here I am now with a mask on my face :
 For many a long year at my downfall I've grumbled,
 But uselessly, *la, lalla, la, la.*

And now that you've heard all my pitiful story,
 I think that you may as well peacefully pass ;
 For never before did I see such an Ass,
 Like an open-mouthed, ugly-eyed, grinning John Dory.
 So pass, Ass, *la, lalla, la, la.*

Goethe.

This fellow answers you in your own vein.

Mephistopheles.

So much the better ; mockery and I
 Are ancient comrades, and will never fight.
 Pardon, Sir Momus, but I knew you not ;
 I did not hope to find you in these wilds.

Momus.

Nor I to meet Sir Voland at this hour.
 But whither go you with your courteous friend ?
 He looks like some young scholar of the Muses.

Mephistopheles.

I wish to introduce him to the Witches,
 Who hold their orgies somewhere in these hills ;
 But 'tis so long since I've been to these quarters,
 I scarcely know the route. Can you direct me ?

Momus.

Turn to the right—then down to the left,
 Then up to the centre where ten roads converge ;
 If you choose the right road, and omit the wrong nine,
 Through a chasm of twelve chasms you'll quickly emerge,
 Where the Witches are dancing and drinking witch wine.

Goethe.

This Grecian god can juggle like yourself ;
 The road he speaks of seems extremely clear.

Mephistopheles.

I see a wandering gleam of pale blue fire
 Cresting yon craggy peak, and can discern
 Dark phantoms whirling in the Bacchant dance,

Around twelve brazen caldrons breathing flame.
 These are the ladies surely—hence, away ;
 And while we go, sweet music shall escort us,
 Making us think we're not in Hell but Heaven.

As they ascend the mountain, a SEIREN, invisible to GOETHE, sings the following song, accompanied by delicate music. Nymphs, of extreme loveliness, seem floating in the atmosphere around both.

A Spirit with starry eyes and wings
 Comes to me oft in dreams ;
 Her face is as fair as the sweet young spring's,
 Her laugh like sunshine gleams.
 Her cheeks are a garden of flow'rets rare,
 Sweet music is in her sighs ;
 Her smiles illumine the golden air,
 And heaven is in her eyes.

A pause—music.

Her beautiful neck and breast of snow
 Are as bright as the milky way,
 When its thousand stars shine forth, and shew
 A lustre exceeding day.
 Her dark brown tresses and little hands,
 And feet of exquisite mould,
 Make her seem, as she walks on the silver sands,
 Like sea-born Venus of old.

A pause—music.

She treads the earth as angels tread
 The bowers of bliss above ;
 And such beauty and goodness are round her shed,
 That I think she's the Spirit of Love ;

But ah ! when she ought to be warm, I find
 That she's colder than winter snow ;
 How *can* she look so winning and kind,
 And tease a poor dreamer so ?

The Phantoms hover around GOETHE, wreathing him with garlands, fragrant and splendid, courting and tempting him with the most bewitching movements. Young CUPIDS, waving torches and pelting each other with roses, flutter in the air : all seems beauty and sunlight.

Mephistopheles.

These are words of gems and flowers ;
 Wouldst thou wish to hear another ?

Aside.

Do no fig-leaves flourish here ?

Siren.

Lonely on the vernant side
 Of the crystal-springing Ide,
 Gazing on the towers of Troy,
 Lay the princely Shepherd-boy.

On a bank with flow'rs o'ergrown,
 Carelessly his pipe was thrown ;
 Like a singing bird asleep
 When the stars their vigils keep.

Though around him sunshine lay,
 Little heeded he the ray,
 Or the fragrance of the rose,
 On whose lips the bees repose.

Though a fountain murmured near
With a music soft and clear,
Little recked he its sweet sound,
Buried in his thoughts profound.

Love alone was in his dreams,
Tincturing with Elysian gleams
All the fancies fair that roll
Through the amorous Shepherd's soul.

While thus rapt in golden thought,
On a beam of sunshine wrought,
Four Immortals from the skies
Wafted were before his eyes.

On the flowers descended there,
Juno, Pallas, Venus fair ;
Stately all, and bright of blee,
Each a very galaxy.

Hermes fourth was in the band,
Bearing in his godlike hand
A gold apple—the bequest
Destined for the loveliest.

From the green and dewy lawn,
Like a startled forest fawn,
Jumped the boy in mute amaze,
Dazzled by the heavenly blaze.

But before a word he spoke,
Wingèd Hermes silence broke—
“From our own Olympian home,
Shepherd, to thy fields we come.

Zeus has sent us unto thee,
Beauty's happy judge to be ;
From this gentle choir select,
As thine eye and taste direct.

This fair gift of brightest gold
For the loveliest behold—
Take it, and bestow it where
Centre charms beyond compare.”

Thus he said, and vanished straight,
Like the stars when Morning's gate
Opes, and young Apollo speeds
On with lightning-footed steeds.

Then the goddesses prepared,
Each with snowy bosom bared,
By the longing youth to pass
As he stretched upon the grass.

First came Juno, Heaven's queen,
Rivalling the sun in sheen ;
In her eyes was Power enshrined,
On her brow imperial Mind.

“Thrones and empires shall be thine,
If thou mak'st this apple mine.”
Speaking thus, along she passed
Like a trumpet's mighty blast.

Next Athenè came, blue-eyed,
With that mild and gentle pride
Which on Wisdom always tends,
Elevates, yet ne'er offends.

“ Knowledge, which is Power,” she cries,
 “ Shall be thine, if mine the prize !”
 Like some old delicious song,
 Gracefully she moved along.

Lastly Aphroditè came,
 With an eye of sapphire flame,
 With a cheek which rosy hues,
 Lovelier than the Morn suffuse.

With a breast more lustrous far
 Than the glittering Evening star,
 And a form than snow more white,
 Sleeping in the cold moonlight.

“ At my feet the apple throw,
 I’ll on thee a Nymph bestow.
 Whom all hearts confess to be
 Only less divine than me.”

Gaily on the Goddess moved,
 In her hand the prize beloved ;
 Who would not for Beauty bright,
 Crowns and Wisdom gladly slight ?

Mephistopheles.

I spare no pains, you see, to give you pleasure,—
 The flowery accents of sweet song, the light
 Of stars divine that gem the Olympian air
 Through which we’re treading to soft music’s measure,
 The Dorian lute’s enchantments, that invite
 To dreams, like those that honey-breathing sleep
 Wafts through the frame, and when we reach the end

Of this fine tour, I'll treat you to a feast
 Of nectar-dropping cups, more rich than any
 The dome sublime of Father Zeus contains.

Goethe.

By heaven, I feel once more a man !

Mephistopheles.

Of course

You do ; the nonsense that they preached has passed
 And like the swiftly-dying race of mortals,
 Leaves nought behind it but—I'll show you scenes
 Where my own favourite children, such as you,
 Pass very happy hours, as blest as gods ;
 They know no night ; an ever-gleaming Sun
 Shines o'er their homes ; the sunbright meads are green,
 And damasked o'er with roses, fragrant, red,
 And white, like the rich breasts of Aphroditè.
 The land is shaded with thick groves of trees,
 Glittering with gold and rich with fragrancy ;
 And there they wheel the chariot o'er the plain,
 Or tame the prancing steed, or strike the lyre
 When blue-eyed Dian's light illumines the eve.
 The ocean breezes fan those blessed isles,
 Where flowers of gold glisten from emerald trees ;
 While jocund plenty blooms all round, and perfume
 Is scattered from the altars of their gods,
 That blaze for ever with star-glancing fires.
 And all these glories shall be thine for ever,
 If thou wilt but fall down and worship me.

Aside.

If this poetic nonsense don't subdue him,
 I know not what will make his wine-bag mine.

Goethe.

More music—let me hear the voice of song,
And the flute's sweetly-flowing breath again.

Mephistopheles.

Behold two lovers seated on that hill,
A youth and female ; she is violet-tressed,
And purple-zoned, and in her milky hand
She holds a silver beaker ; they are those
Of whom the Voice invisible late hymned ;
He courts her to his arms—I think, indeed,
If we but listen, we shall hear his strain.

THE SONG OF PARIS TO HELEN.

Come hither, come hither, and sit by me,
Under the shade of the greenwood tree ;
I've a secret, Dearest, to murmur to thee,
 On those twin lips dewy and tender ;
And thus while I sit, to thy bosom prest,
With all thy love in thy look confest,
Oh, wonder not if I feel more blest
 Than kings on their thrones of splendour.

Thy voice has a music to stay the hours,
Thy smiles are as sweet as those garden bowers,
When broidered by May with the rosiest flowers
 That summer skies ever beamed on ;
And in those eyes, as the morning bright,
Is sitting a Cupid—a sunlike sprite—
Oh, never hath Bard, in vision of light,
 A lovelier Image dreamed on.

The books, the songs, I loved so well,
 The evening walk in the leafy dell,
 The midnight planets, whose radiant spell
 Could cheer my solitude lonely,
 Are changed—and no more their joys impart
 When thou art away, who my angel art,—
 There stands a Temple within my heart,
 And thou art its idol only.

A Phantom of Beauty, more bright than May,
 Flits round me like sunlight, and gilds my way—
 Her smiles, her glances, wherever I stray,
 Like showers of roses fall o'er me ;
 Come tell me, dearest, come tell me true,
 The name of this Phantom that meets my view,
 Or need I declare that while sitting by you
 The Real of this Phantom's before me ?

Mephistopheles (aside).

The acrid poisons of dark human passions
 Dye the white soul so deeply, that it grows
 Even of their own nature ; and when death
 Resolves it from the body, still desires
 The Idols which it worshipped in the flesh.
 So he, who for so many years has dwelt
 In contemplation of mere worldly things,
 Still is enticed away, as in his life,
 From the ideal-lovely to the actual.—
 Sing on, again, my pretty wanton Siren.

To GOETHE.

See, the young Shepherd courts his love again ;
 While archer Cupid lies in both their looks,
 Ready for mischief. Ah, poor Menelaus !
 I'd pity you, but that I shake with laughter.

Siren (still invisible).

Those tresses, soft and beautiful as morning ;
 Thy teeth that with the pearls may vie in whiteness ;
 The rosy buds thy milky cheek adorning ;
 Those sweet fond eyes, insphering sunny brightness,
 Shall not be always so, Beloved !—but render
 Up to the grasp of Time their dazzling splendour.

Go, seek the garden in the time of roses—
 Of Beauty, in her prime, a type portraying ;
 Pace it again, when Winter there reposes,
 And the once lovely flowers are all decaying.
 So shall it be with *thee*, when Time shall scatter
 Years o'er thy head, and all thy roses shatter.

Swifter than hinds, along the meadows flying,
 Fleeter than pards from hounds and hunters leaping,
 Time rushes onward, in pursuit undying,
 His track of death with stricken mortals heaping ;
 Will he who crumbleth monarchs, warriors, nations,
 List to a gentle woman's supplications ?

No !—fierce, relentless, blood-stained, on he hasteth,
 Gorged to the throat with spoil of youth and beauty !
 Ere then, Beloved, thy gentle charms he tasteth,
 Hearken—oh ! hearken unto love's sweet duty !
 Fondly thine arms of snow around me twining,
 Enjoy thy May of life while May is shining.

Goethe.

Will she consent ?

Mephistopheles.

Did Helen e'er refuse ?

See—she is folded in his arms ; away,—
The scene grows rather warm ; methinks a cloud
Of roses should spread o'er their happy transports.

Young Witch (*extremely beautiful*).

Ah, come here, you pretty fellow,
Wondrous sights I'll shew you ; charms
Such as ne'er, since earth was mellow,
Stooped to any mortal's arms.

Goethe.

Canst thou read the hidden Future ?
If thou canst, and wilt expound it—

Mephistopheles.

This is nonsense, Man, confound it,
Do not ask her—'twill not suit your
Purpose ;—be advised by me.

Old Witch (*aside*).

Artfully Sir Voland acts it,
Feigning anger to excite him.

Young Witch.

Yes, I know it ; will your lordship
Let me shew what will delight him ?

Mephistopheles.

Since he presses, I agree.

Young Witch.

This is the sole true art of divination,
 Taught to us by Pythagoras of Samos ;—

Mephistopheles.

Whose Romish doctrine of the Transmigration,
 Makes his name here, as in Crotona, famous.

She takes a mirror, which she inscribes with blood ; and bidding GOETHE stand behind her, she shews the mirror to the Moon, which appears cresting the distant mountains. GOETHE looks steadfastly, and perceives his own name written on the Moon's disk in characters of blood, and a motto, importing that, act as he may, his soul is now everlastingly lost.

Mephistopheles (*aside*).

'Pon my word this Witch has finely
 Done the very thing I wanted ;
 Where in hell she got the Moon though,
 Even without a *nomine Domini*,
 I know not—the fool's enchanted.
 This will sure destroy his visions
 Of Miss Peggy and of Heaven,
 And persuade him to make any
 Bargain with me while he's able.
 Fal, lal, lal, resume your dancing !

Merrily round the Witches dance—
 Nay, Old One, restrain your prancing ;
 Trust me, that 'tis not enhancing
 Perfect charms like yours, which never
 Can require the least endeavour
 To fill all with love entrancing.

Merrily round the Witches dance.

Old Witty (*aside*).

His eyes are riveted on the scene, for some
 Of these false Witches brighter are than angels ;
 And Paris did not gaze on more seducing
 Creations of fine beauty than are now
 In naked witchery set before our Minstrel.
 Arise, vain form and shape deceitful, rise,
 With unreal splendour mock his dazzled eyes.

*A phantom-picture ascends from the caldrons, stretching
 away to a great distance in airy splendid colours. The
 whole atmosphere seems illumined with sunshine. He
 beholds the GARDEN OF THE HESPERIDES.*

Goethe.

A Garden pranked with flowers of loveliest hues
 And fragrance is before me. Who are these
 Three wondrous Goddesses, with charms all bare,
 Who bring me this gold apple, and entreat
 That I may give it to the fairest one ?

Mephistopheles.

Know you not Venus, Juno, and Athenè ?
 What moon-white splendours in each neck and breast !
 They come from Zeus to you, as erst they did
 To Alexander in Mount Ida's dells ;
 Begging you to bestow the golden gift
 Upon the loveliest ; see, it is inscribed
 In graceful Greek.

Goethe.

Then, Venus, it is thine.

Mephistopheles.

The Aphrodisian goddess thanks you much,
And will bestow in recompense for this
Immortal apple one ambrosial kiss.

Goethe.

O Gods ! I dream—an ecstasy of madness
Seizes me as I fold within my arms
The cestus-bearing Queen. Away—away !
Another moment—press me—press me yet.

Mephistopheles.

Come, sir, I wait you.

Goethe.

Wait me ? how now, fool ?
Was it to mock me, then, you brought me hither ?

Mephistopheles.

Mock thee, indeed—I'd rather die than mock thee ;
But there are certain matters which thou knowest
Preface the Paradise I promised thee ;
For instance, thou must first fall down and worship.

Goethe.

Worship ! I will not—

Mephistopheles.

Then I'm very sorry,
But I must do my duty, and escort thee
To the Abyss, and through it.

Goethe.

Nay, but pause :
Is there no other way ?

Mephistopheles (*fiercely*).

There is not, fool !

And though there were I would not now bestow it,
Nor would I take thee. Hence, away, away !
Thou hast refused the proffered boon of heaven ;
My heaven, which I would then have given thee.
I were a rascal, shame to all my tribe,
If I allowed thee to play fast and loose.

Aside.

I have him sure. I swear it by the Goose
Of Socrates, and that anserian bird
On which wise Lacidas, the Cyrenian sage,
Bestowed a funeral, whose trappings vied
With those of kings ; the sot is drunk already
With the mad honey from the Witch's lips ;
The frenzy seizes him. Avaunt ! mild Wisdom,
This disappointment will but whet him more ;
And I've another little witchery waiting
To crown the bent of these ensnaring potions.
Gretchen, methinks thy prayers are idle air.
Now to the Hells—I'll shew him fire and smoke,
Caldron and pit and ocean, rack and wheel,
And with fine promises, such as lovers swear
To credulous maids by moonshine, win his soul,
And mock old Minos when we meet again.

SCENE III.

THE PORTAL OF HELL.

Rabbi Moses.

In Hell there are seventy and seven divisions, and in each division sixty thousand houses, and in each house sixty thousand chests, and in each chest sixty thousand barrels of gall. Those who have been transgressors against their own souls do not all suffer in one division, or in one fire; but every one is assigned to this or that division, according as he hath deserved; for which reason the fire of one division is more fierce and devouring than that of another; so that our Sages have said, the fire in the first division is not a sixtieth part so fierce as the fire in the second; and that this is the difference in respect of intensity between all the other fires and torments, each gaining from the first an increase of sixty fold in the fierceness of its flame. And there are sixty thousand and six different fires in this land. And there are three which govern in Hell under the power of Duma, namely, Maschith, Af, and Chuna, and under them be all the hosts which judge and punish the wicked. These hosts shake all Hell, and the noise is heard as far as the firmament of Heaven. And the Voices of the Wicked who are under their hands are heard crying out, Woe! Woe! and there are none to pity them. And all the filthiness of the Wicked who are punished in Hell falls down into the lowermost dwelling, which is called Avaddor; and to

this there is a descent of steps which is called Zoah Fothacath ; and in this division there is not one spark of excellence. In this place are all the Unclean Souls together with the poison of serpents ; and the steps thereof lead down to the lowermost dwelling of Hell, into which falls all abomination ; and it is full of vomit and horribleness, so that there is no part thereof clean. And I measured the first House in the first division of Hells, and I found it to be twenty thousand miles in length and twenty thousand miles in breadth ; and I saw therein many Caverns, and in the Caverns Lions of Fire ; and when an Evil Soul falls into one of these Caverns, he is devoured slowly by the Lions ; and when he is consumed, he appears again as perfect as if he had not been touched ; and after that are they who are thus restored, hurled again into the fire of every Cavern of every House in the first division of Hell. And there riseth up a Demon who beateth every one with a fiery whip, and he is called Kuschiel ; and he saith, Throw them in, and they are thrown in, and are consumed. Then are others brought forth whom he likewise beats ; and thus are they all served till all have had their punishment. And thus are the sinners tortured who are in the seventy thousand apartments of each abode in each division of Hell ; and no one seeth another by reason of the darkness in those places ; for all the darkness which was before the formation of the World, is there collected together. And there is one-half that is replete with Fire, and the other half with Hail, and the wicked toss themselves from the Fire into the Hail, and from the Hail into the Fire ; and an Angel of Hell driveth them as a shepherd doth his flock from the hills to the valleys,

and from the valleys to the hills ; and the flame of their torment is the flame of seventy thousand red hot furnaces. And in each abode there are seven thousand Caverns, and in each Cavern seven thousand Clefs, and in each cleft seven thousand Scorpions, and each Scorpion hath seven stings, and in each sting a barrel of gall. And there are Seven Rivers of the rankest poison, which when a man touches he bursteth. And the Destroying Angels judge and scourge the guilty every moment, half a year in the Fire, and half a year in the Hail and Snow, and the cold is more intolerable than the Fire, And unto this end, am I, the Chief Rabbi Moses, placed here, condemned for ever and ever to read this Book unto all who descend into this Abyss of Torture, for that in my days on earth, I doubted the existence of this region, and I taught others to doubt also.

SCENE IV.

MEPHISTOPHELES *and* GOETHE.*Mephistopheles.*

The Ancients thought that it was the same distance
 From Heaven to Earth as 'twas from Earth to Hell ;
 Greatly they erred ; but they had not the assistance
 Of John of Patmos, so could hardly tell ;
 Vulcan, although he met with no resistance,
 Took ten whole days when down from Heaven he fell :
 Whereas I've seen some millions, nay, have reckoned,
 Who, dead on earth, were here within a second.

The thing's a miracle beyond explaining,
 Why people should come here so very quickly,
 And go so slowly hence ; I'm not complaining—
 I leave it to the sentimental sickly ;
 But strange it is that Virgil, who, in feigning,
 Confined himself to facts and fiction strictly,
 Makes the remark, descent to hell is facile ;
 Ascent is difficult for the most gracile.

We'll not dispute, however, on the matter,
 Enough for you and me that we are here ;
 I'll shew you things that might suggest a satire,
 Could you get back again to your own sphere ;
 But as you can't, and as you love to chatter,
 And above all, at man to laugh and sneer,

You'll find rich food for mirth in this our journey,
Provided for you by Hell's Baron Gurney.

You shall behold the Spectres of Mythology,
The Monsters of the Air, and Earth, and Hell ;
All pictures faint of our true Demonology,
As half an hour ago you heard me tell,
The Zeus and Pluto of the past Theology,
Were only names for some of *us* who fell,
And shewed ourselves on earth to men who straight,
Like silly flat fish nibbled at the bait.

Some of the scribblers of the modern schools,
Declare, as you have heard, these tales were Myths,
And prove it cleverly by grammar's rules,
Laughing at Styx and its infernal friths ;
When you've seen all, you'll dub the fellows fools,
Whose volumes should be given up to smiths
To light their fires with ; every god in story
Belonged of right to Satan's territory.

In Greece we fooled men in the name of Zeus ;
In Rome they worshipped us, and called us Jove ;
So we seduced, and ever will seduce,
The mortal race from Him who's Lord above ;
The monstrous things which poets introduce,
Incests, intrigues in temple, stream, and grove,
Are all true facts, and were achieved by us,
Though many people think them fabulous.

Go to the East ; you'll see us grandly shrined
In temples built of marble and of gold ;
India, Japan, Cathay, have bowed the mind

To us—and think 'tis God that they behold ;
 Go to the West, and if you're so inclined,
 You'll see our images in every fold,
 Erected by the shepherds for their sheep,
 Where, for our Lord, their flocks secure they keep.

We're standing now upon the threshold dark
 Of very Hell and its ten thousand Mansions ;
 The Harpies scream, Snakes hiss, and Bloodhounds bark
 In chorus not so musical as scansions
 Of Homer's verse ; the fires roar up, and chark
 The soul to cinder, curbing its expansions,
 And making it a very squalid "fragment
 Of air divine," such as the ancient wag meant.

Goethe.

But how can fire material harm the soul,
 Which is immortal—an ambrosial air ?

Mephistopheles.

You think it can't be crisped into a coal ;—
 That was the nonsense talked by old Voltaire ;
 A sophism sly, contemptible and droll,
 Worthy of sages smart and débonnaire,
 And always shallow ; but I think you'll feel
 Yourself ere long that even souls can squeal.

'Tis not for me to expound to you theology,
 Or chemistry, or cards, or divination ;
 Or preach the recent theories on geology,
 Which carry back so far the world's creation ;
 Proving by proofs well-founded on conchology
 That Moses drew on his imagination ;

This, Baron most renowned, is not my business ;
The very thought has made me feel a dizziness.

I'll not deny omnipotence, like Paine,
By saying an island can't be made without
Water around it ; nor waste time in vain
By reasoning which might make a baby doubt ;
The Origin of Evil and of Cain,
Are not such themes as I intend to spout ;
My mission simply is to shew you Hades,
And name its tenants, gentlemen and ladies.

For you and your vile race I feel such scorn
As souls like mine, the Sons of God, must feel
For creatures who, like toads and apes are born ;
Fit only to be trampled under heel ;
You doubt of God—poor worm—and would suborn
The intellect He gave, your hearts to steel.
Against Him, and rise up in fierce denial—
Pray tell me, don't you merit wrath's full vial ?

We pamper you on earth to this conceit,—
Pride and revenge compel us to these things
But when we have you here our work's complete ;
We let you loose from all false-leading strings :
In hell mere blasphemy is obsolete ;
We tried it once against the King of Kings,
And failed—We want not here such imitators ;
Enough for us that, living, you were traitors.

He conquered us—the day was His ; but ours
Has been revenge indeed ; the world He made
For you has left His worship for The Powers

Infernal ; we alone are there obeyed :
 If the great soul I bear, stoops, crawls, and cowers
 Before your race, 'tis that it may degrade
 You—them, and all, beneath the vilest beasts ;—
 We do so—on your souls our vengeance feasts.

On earth we did your work, and were your slaves ;
 Here, in our own dominions, we are lords,
 And rule supreme ; the cheated fools and knaves
 Who form our prey, and are our bondaged hordes,
 Tremble beneath our bloody swords and glaives :
 The game is won—things rule with us, not words ;—
 Truth, Mercy, Justice, God, we fight, scorn, hate ;—
 But to *deny* is not allowed by Fate.

Therefore, my dear Companion, 'tis no use
 To be a sceptic here,—we're all believers ;
 The devil who doubted were indeed a goose,
 Or mad as men when raving in brain fevers ;
 I love a little laughter—no abuse
 Of what's above us ; I and mine are weavers
 Of pleasant mockery, jibes, and jests, and jokes,
 Which we play off upon terrestrial folks.

I'm glad, I own, to see you bear damnation
 So very pleasantly :—and yet I think
 That till you've gone through the first mild probation,
 And found yourself so tough as not to shrink,
 You may as well defer your jubilation ;
 For *my* part, I'll rejoice to see you wink
 And hold your iron out, mine ancient Pistol,
 Trampling the flames like some suspected Vestal.

I guess, however, ere I've shewn you over
 These fruitful plains, which you must know will be
 The future home of such a wayward rover
 As you have been, you'll sign and seal with me ;
 You could not always hope to live in clover,
 Worshipped with such insane idolatry,
 As wise Egyptians lavished upon cats,
 Crocodiles, monkeys, weasels, worms, and rats.

Here is a chamber named from old Procrustes,
 Filled with some hundred beds of every size,
 So that when one comes down whose God was lust, he's
 Nailed to a couch on whose red bars he fries ;—
 This is not all—to add to his disgust, he's
 Chopped short, or stretched to suit on what he lies.
 If he's too long for it they saw his legs off—
 If he's too short they stretch him though he begs off.

Crusty himself we've changed into a Demon ;
 He superintends these jokes, much to his glee,
 Laughing and cursing like a paid-off seaman
 Wild with new freedom, and with sangaree ;
 Minos our judge would gladly make *you* freeman
 Of this blest body corporate which you see,
 But as you might not like this sort of living
 Sell yourself straight to me without misgiving.

I told you, nay, my Paradise I disclosed,
 Although I did not shew you all its stages ;
 That is a duty which I've not imposed
 Upon myself until I get my wages ;
 Had you agreed to what I then proposed,
 You should have lived there pleasantly for ages,

In pastime grave or jovial, wise or learned ;—
Better by far than this mere wild-goose errand.

I've always liked you literary people,
And sometimes I revise your books of rhymes ;
At Castalie I've taken many a tippie ;
'Twas *I* invented mysteries and mimes ;
I taught the Orient the Enigmas Triple,
And how to call forth Memnon's mystic chimes,
Which sounded from the hollow head, when Dawn
Shed forth her splendours soft as eyes of fawn.

I followed Homer, and for many a year
Expected I should win him to my side ;
Ascræan Hesiod next was my compeer,
I taught him myths, and was his faithful guide :
Tyrtæus, battle's fiery chanticleer,
Archilochus and Sappho, beauty's pride,
I lived with, shewing them the primrose road
That leads to Styx, but they abjured my code.

I passed to China, and Confucius taught
Some of the true Mythology of Hell ;
But all my labours were bestowed for nought,
That pig-eyed lawgiver I could not quell ;
The sacred plains of Israel next I sought,
And was with Solomon when first he fell
To worship idols as his ladies told him ;
But for his wisdom I had hither bowled him.

I rambled back to Greece, and spent the hours
With old Democritus, the laughing sage ;
The wisdom that he preached was wholly ours,

To laugh at life as one would at the stage
 Where farce was played : his life thus passed on flowers,
 Instead of being cursed with grief or rage ;
 I laboured much to get him, but somehow
 He 'scaped—and got to Limbo, where he's now.

From him I passed to bald-pate Socrates.

The Graces were enshrined within his breast ;
 You may be sure they gave me little ease,
 To drive them out I did my very best :
 They kept their place, and after his decease
 They raised him to the Islands of the Blest,
 Where with immortal Spirits, throned in light,
 He lives, and thinks me but a blundering wight.

Disgusted much, I left the earth, and vowed

I'd tempt philosophers and bards no more ;
 But Satan all excuses disallowed,
 And sent me back ;—I wandered o'er and o'er
 The world, until I singled from the crowd,
 Diogenes, the Dog, whose atheist lore
 Pleas'd me so much ; I stayed with him until
 He died, and was condemned in fire to grill.

With Plautus next at Rome I long sojourn'd ;

Then took my quarters up with gorgeous Sallust,
 Who common decency so boldly spurned,
 He seem'd that Roman idol hugely phallused,
 Who met you in whatever grove you turned ;
 And mad you think your virtue useless ballast,
 Which you might very fairly fling away,
 And give yourself entirely up to clay.

With Doctor Martin Luther, the bold friar,
 I had some conferences, as he writes ;
 I proved the Pope was Antichrist's true cryer ;
 I proved the Mass a heap of Pagan rites ;
 I made him fill his beer-can higher and higher ;
 We walked and supped and slept in bed o'nights ;
 And were, as he relates, the closest friends,
 Working together for the self-same ends.

His soul, however, which was like a burst
 Of sunshine on the night of human mind,
 'Scaped me, and now stands forth in Heaven the first
 Among those priests of Rome who dared unbind
 The soul from fetters, which the very worst
 Of reverend fiends around their serfs entwined ;
 Erasmus laid the egg, but Luther hatched it ;
 The first for glory longed, but Martin snatched it.

From thence till now I've made my choice to dwell
 With Christians only, who delight me most ;
 Their theories have so divine a smell,
 Though not so wonderful as parsons boast ;
 Their practices, however, lead to Hell ;
 We've more of them than any other host ;
 For never yet lived one of them who did
 The holy things that Christ expressly bid.

I was with Swift, when mocking much, he wrote
 That wondrous tale of tales, the *Tale of a Tub* ;
 I was with Somerset, when, with viper throat,
 She begged Queen Anne that splendid priest to snub ;
 I brought the Duchess here, and gave my vote
 That she should cage with Cerberus our cub ;

I also seized the soul of Brandy Nan,
For daring to put Swift beneath her ban.

I whispered something into Dante's ear,
When with rough Virgil he passed through this place ;
I dictated some jokes—not too austere—

To him whom Frenchmen queerly call Boccace ;
Rabelais, Dan Chaucer, Milton, bent to hear
Some of my waggeries ; Voltaire's sharp face
Lighted up when I came ; near Byron's pen
I sat, and mocked at all within his ken.

But *you*, since Arouet, were my dearest bairn,
I liked you better even than Ferney's lord ;
I prized your fine contemptuous unconcern
Of everything in old or new record ;
Had I gone up to earth myself to incarn,
I could not have—believe it on my word !
Made a sublimer scamp than you, and hence
My wish to help you in your exigence.

I could have got you comfortable lodgings,
Almost as good as those you owned at home,
Where you'd have had some very pleasant dodgings,
With this young Witch, and that old cunning Gnome :
But when you raised a heap of doubts and bodgings,
About a trifle, I began to foam ;
And vowed I'd leave you to the fate which Minos
Cut out for you, as your appropriate *finis*.

And yet you'd better bargain with me ere
It be too late. I'll give a capital price
For your *no* chance of getting hence elsewhere ;
Do it—I'll take you with me in a trice

To a green maze, built by those Witches fair
 Whom you so leered at ;—in whose Paradise
 You can enjoy yourselves in spite of Moses,
 And at the Gods turn up your mocking noses.

If you're still bent on dreaming that some stroke
 Of Fate or Fortune waits us when we reach
 Our journey's end—dream on : I will not joke
 Or interrupt you by sarcastic speech ;
 I have you firmly like a pig in a poke,
 However *you* may scold, or Peggy preach
 And so we'll re-commence our dismal tour—
 The scene grows blacker than a blackamoor.

Here are the jaws of Orcus ; Griefs, Diseases,
 Horrent, cadaverous, spectral, black and pale ;
 Famine, with wolfish fangs that garbage seizes ;
 Mad Discord howling in her iron jail ;
 And squalid Want, whose icy aspect freezes ;
 And viper-folded Madness, breathing bale ;
 And Murder, robed in blood, and ghastly Fear ;
 And Nightmare, scattering portents far and near.

Here also is the frightful prodigy Fame,
 Than whom no fouler breathes the infernal air ;
 Pigmy at first, she hides her head in shame ;
 Anon she swells to size beyond compare ;
 A million watchful eyes encase her frame,
 Which seems indeed all eye, but that where'er
 She turns her gaze, a million tongues and ears
 Drink in, and spread hopes, frenzies, lies, and fears.

She whispers—nations tremble and bow down ;
 She shouts—an empire totters, swoons, and dies ;
 From this she robs—to this she hands a crown ;
 Her voice enwraps the globe and fills the skies ;
 Restlessly gadding on from town to town,
 Sleep binds no golden fillet o'er her eyes,
 Nor labour tires her tongues, nor noise confounds
 These ears that gape for all deceitful sounds.

Near her sits Envy, skeleton-limbed and pale,
 Covered with eyes that ne'er look straight ; a scowl
 Grins on her brows ; an ear for every tale
 Of Calumny, a tongue those tales to howl ;
 Black clots of poison mark her gall-dewed trail ;
 She never smiles but at some treason foul,
 Such as her darlings plan when she instils
 The self-tormenting hate that beauty kills.

She has a nook in every human breast,
 Till Virtue drives her out ; the statesman grave
 Receives her in his holy heart a guest ;
 The lawyer feasts her, and the soldier brave
 Wears her at times upon his waving crest ;
 The reverend priest, whose soul no sins deprave,
 Takes her at church-hour to that hallowed shrine,—
 “ *And, oh, that yonder greasy stall were mine !*”

The atmosphere all round is thick with Cares
 And wild Suspicions ; Vengeance, stained with gore,
 And deeply gashed with wounds ; black Hate, that tears
 Even her own vitals ; Avarice, clotted o'er
 With gold that looks like blood ; fierce Lust that rears
 His savage front ; Ambition—Falsehood hoar,

And many-changing ; Malice, with snake-smile ;
Anger, blood-venomed, and fair-seeming Guile.

And mixed with these are Spectres without number,
Not to be named and nameless ; black and hideous,
Such as on earth pollute the sick man's slumber,
Rendering the sleep that should refresh him tedious
And horrible ; false Phantoms that encumber
The waking reveries of the mad religious
With maniac vision and confused sorites,
Making such things as Southcote and Stylites.

Dreary vacuity, never-ending gloom,
And pestilential-breathing clouds obscure,
Hot copper-coloured mists, that dimly loom
Like dark miasmas from a wide-spread moor ;
A charnel-vapour, worse than aught the tomb
Exhales, of all that's odious and impure ;—
Such is the general aspect of this quarter
Where we roast fools who soul for body barter.

We're treading now upon the giant Typhon,
Whom Juno, jealous of her husband Zeus,
With whom she kept a constant round of strife on,
Which was indeed that lady's general use ;
And glowering on him like a horrid Gryphon,
Because his brain Miss Pallas did produce,
'Gat ; for lest women should be superseded ;
She swore she'd get as good a thing as *he* did.

She prayed to Heaven, she supplicated Earth,
And then invoked the gods, and begged the devils
Would kindly help her in her anxious birth ;
For which, she said, she'd ask them to her revels ;

Pluto, who dearly likes infernal mirth,
Resolved, despite old Proserpine's grave cavils,
To aid her ; Juno struck the ground, and lo !
Typhon sprung up and shouted loud, Ho ! ho !

A beautiful production seemed the chap,
And ten times taller than the mountain Andes ;
Whene'er he liked he gave the stars a rap ;
He smote with fright Olympus and its grandees ;
His whisper was an awful thunder-clap ;
What he'd have done if fed on beef and brandies,
I do not know ; but when his right hand touched
The North, the South was in his left hand clutched.

A hundred dragons dangled down his shoulders,
A thousand vipers coiled around his thighs ;
His feathered body frightened all beholders,
And fierce volcanoes belched from his big eyes ;
His mother, once supposed the Queen of Scolders,
Was fairly conquered by this youth of size,
Who swore some blasphemous oaths that made hell quake,
He'd have great Jupiter for a beef-steak.

A fiend so wild and horrible as this
You may be sure caused general hate and flight ;
Yet there was many a matron and chaste miss
Who felt no apprehension of the knight,
But wished him theirs with all their soul ; the bliss
They sighed for did not come ; the gods through spite
Conspired together, and with red-hot thunder
Struck him, and buried him this mountain under.

Here is an orchard full of Sodom apples
 Which turn to acrid ashes when they're bit ;
 We give them to the rich who build up chapels,
 And think that *therefore* they for heaven are fit—
 When they come here our master Satan grapples
 Their souls, and hurls them headlong down his pit ;
 And cries aloud : Receive ye your reward !
 To your own pride ye built—not to the Lord.

The massive Gates of Bronze that frown all round,
 Lifting their mighty arches mountains high
 And oceans wide ; clanging with brazen sound
 As the damned droves within their shadows fly,
 To sleep henceforth in flame and gloom profound ;—
 Are graven each in fire that blinds the eye :
 Lust carved on this, on that Ambition ; there
 Gluttony, Gaming, Theft, in lightning blare.

All the choice vices which you Mortals practise,
 Have each a separate gate and separate road ;
 So that when any comes no doubts distract his
 Clear brain how he may reach his new abode ;
 It burns in flames before him ; and the fact is
 They never *do* mistake—the way is strowed,
 As you may see, with thousands in distress ;—
 You and I pass through this marked Selfishness.

I once supposed we'd pass through gate Ambition,
 The gate of Infidelity, or Meanness,
 All of which lead to the same goal—perdition,
 By several long dark alleys of uncleanness ;
 But since you've stood before our Inquisition,
 I've scanned you with such eyes of eagle keenness,

I entertain no doubt the gate I've named
Is that which your own instincts would have claimed.

Right in our pathway, fronting yon dark Cavern,
Stands Cerberus, the horrid Dog of Hell ;
Courteous as some spruce waiter at a tavern
To all who're entering in, but fierce and fell
To those who would go out ; he casts his slaver on
Their sneaking souls, which makes them leap and yell,
Like Pantaloon in horseplay pantomimes,
Or readers of good taste o'er Twaddle's rhymes.

Cerberus.

Bow wow ! Wow ! Wow ! what news from earth, old
Rabbi ?

What ragamuffin have you brought us now ?
His air methinks is rather mean and shabby ;
We've rogues and scamps enough like him I trow.

Mephistopheles.

He was a poet, Germany's choice babby ;—
They crowned with bays and laurels his bald brow.

Cerberus.

And starved him ?

Mephistopheles.

No ; he sold his soul for money,
Even as your dogship might for cakes of honey.

Cerberus.

Well, he did right ; for rascal mortals treat
Their bards so scurvily, they're fools indeed,

If they *can* sell themselves for bread and meat
To *any* power, to live in abject need.

Mephistopheles.

Were *I* a Poet, sooner than not eat,
And fill my belly to its utmost greed,
I'd mortgage all my future to Old Nick,
And swear by him alone through thin and thick.

Better be laureate to the Devil himself,
Than no one's well-fed rhymer, fool, or clown ;
Better convert your poems into pelf,
By running this rogue up and that one down,
Than live neglected, stuck upon a shelf,
Feeding upon that humbug vile, renown ;—
The greatest of earth's minstrels, blind old Homer,
Was all his life a beggar, scamp, and roamer.

Menander drowned himself in proud despair ;
Dogs tore Euripides : the Ascræan sage
Was murdered ; Socrates drank poison ; fair
And lute-souled Sappho felt the public rage ;
Theocritus was hanged ; the mighty pair,
Demosthenes and Tully, in old age
Died one by poison, one by steel ; the knife
Cut Lucan, Brutus, Seneca from life.

Empedocles and Pliny burned in flame
Volcanic, and the Stagyrite self-drowned ;
Hannibal poisoned ; Naso sent with shame
To Tomos ; Galileo blind and bound
In chains by knaves who dare themselves proclaim
God's viceroys ; pure Lucretius, rainbow-crowned,

Struck by his own right hand—such things as these
Shew how Fate loads the best with agonies.

Plautus and Terence were unhappy slaves ;
And so was Æsop ; sage Boëtius died
In gaol ; Camöens, whose Parnassian staves
Are his accursèd nation's only pride,
Begged in her streets ; o'er Tasso's, Dante's graves—
Massinger's, Dryden's, Chatterton's, have sighed
Thousands, who on past ages bawled out "Shame !"
Then went their way and did the very same.

Butler and Savage, Spenser, Goldsmith, Lee,
Cervantes, Marlow, Otway, Drayton, Forde,
Chapman and Shirley, Fletcher, a bright Three
On eagle-wings to heavenly heights who soared ;
Burns, whose great soul outshone the galaxy
In splendour——lived and starved, and died, abhorred,
Or what is worse, despised by human things
Who scorn the gods, but worship lords and kings.

Who own that Genius is the Child of Heaven
Sent down to earth to beautify its ways ;
Like living Revelations born and given.
How does Man hail it? Like a fiend, he preys
Upon its loveliness. While some are driven
Into despair, and stalk in Frenzy's maze :
Others are crucified ; the murderous Jews
Of old, could they come back, would greatly muse
To see good Christians walking in their shoes.

Rome trampled Scipio ; Florence trimmed the stakes
For Dante ; Cork its weeping Curran scorned ;

London expelled its Byron ; Bristol brake
 The soul of Chatterton ; Rousseau, pain-thorned,
 Was hissed from France ; pure England like a snake
 Stung Shelley : thus the world wags ; while adorned
 With fame and fortune move the hell-born tribe
 Whose names upon our books the Fates inscribe.

But time spurs on.

Cerberus.

The cates ?

Mephistopheles.

I've brought you plenty ;
 Here's a full packet moist with virgin's sighs
 Breathed forth in forests green for rakes of twenty,
 Seasoned with widow's tears and lovers' lies,
 Made up besides of the most choice frumenty,—
 Pluto ne'er tasted more delicious pies—

Cerberus.

Bow wow ! Wow ! Wow ! Gob ! gobble ! gobble ! gobble !

Mephistopheles.

Heavens ! how his jaws and belly swag and wabble.

Never before saw I such monstrous cramming,—
 His fifty throats like air-blown bladders swell ;
 I've seen artillerymen with ramrods ramming
 Thirty-six pound shot down a cannon's well ;
 I've seen fat bishops skilled in cant and shamming,
 Gorging green fat through gullets deep as hell,
 But ne'er before in things of fact or fiction
 Dreamed I of jaws with such a power of friction.

Here at this Gate is seated One in white,—

A Saint, I think—we'll not inquire his name ;
Beside him stands a black and sneering Sprite,
Whose nostrils vomit a Tartarean flame.

One of the mouths of Hell opes to the right,
Ready to gulp down deaf, and blind, and lame,
Ancient and youth, as children swallow plums,
For all is grist that to our millers comes.

A nicely-balanced scale is swung between,—

The saint has weights of gold, the Devil of lead ;
Soon as a trembling soul's approaching seen,
Shrinking back like the coward letter Z,
His deeds are weighed : the Saint and Imp, as keen
As rats about a piece of bacon-shred,
Watch how the tongue inclines, and save or damn,
Quicker than you could pen an epigram.

This landscape's not enchanting ; mountains, hills,
Rocks, caverns, chasms, great whirlpools, and deep dens,
With thick brown marshes fed from putrid rills,
Exhaling the worst odours of worst fens ;
Smoke, flame, mists, soot, and all the other ills
The damned are heirs to in these ghastly pens,
Where Satan folds his flocks like some good shepherd,
Or butcher rather, till they 're burned and peppered.

In these steel Ovens there are several millions

Baked till their brains boil out through their skull
bones.

Here are about ten thousand Imps—postillions
Who sit upon the Dead, like huge millstones

Around their necks ;—this novel sort of pillions
 Amuses them, so, maugre kicks and groans,
 They spur them on along a pathway bristling
 With lances for a pavement, gaily whistling.

Our thieves are punished by beholding jewels,
 Sardonyx, diamond, emerald, heavens of light
 Within their reach—they grasp them : hell's worst fuels
 Of hottest fire they grasp, not treasures bright.
 Drunkards drink boiling lead and water, gruels
 By no means pleasing to their appetite ;
 The tongues of liars are cut off with shears,
 And hypocrites weep molten brass, not tears.

Perhaps you'll ask me why it is The Elohim
 Permit such monstrous scenes, or damn at all ?
 Such queries might become an Epic poem,
 Lucretius-like, or Atheists when they scrawl.
 The Eternal Powers—omitting further proem—
 Cannot themselves the Destinies enthrall.
 Necessity constrains them ; Sin and Crime
 Must be atoned for somewhere, at some time.

Omnipotence itself is bound by laws ;
 It cannot pardon hideous vice ; its soul
 Is virgin pure ; and hence you trace the cause
 Why of necessity it feels control.
 It does not thrust those knaves to Hell's hot jaws,
 They thrust themselves into the Hadèan hole ;
 The Devils they worshipped while on earth they follow
 From habit still, until they reach Hell's hollow.

God sends not any man to Hell, no more
Than Law sends desperate criminals to jail ;
Their own base natures send them—'twere a bore
To lengthen further such a plain true tale.
You and your kith on earth may hiss and roar,
As loudly as you like, and mock, and rail ;
There's nothing truer than that Hell exists,
And that God's heaven is *not* for men grown beasts.

Like a fierce wind that scatters burning embers
In clouds of smoke along the dusky air,
Our demons wrench them, severing limbs and members,
Deaf to their cries of terror and despair ;
Each in his terrible torment well remembers
(It flashes on him with a lightning glare),
The evil deed done in his days of flesh ;
The limbs rejoin—they torture him afresh.

Their greatest worry is the devilish laughter
Of mockery and spite, contempt and hate,
With which the Imps salute their misery, after
They did their utmost while in mortal state
To serve them ; bad ambition, lust, theft, craft, or
Hypocrisy, have brought them to this fate
Of fire, dismemberment, and choking vapours ;
And well the rogues deserve it for their capers.

Sometimes they tear the wretches into pieces,
And stick the quivering limbs on fiery prongs ;
Sometimes they strip them of their skinny fleeces,
Beating them all the while with leathern thongs ;

Sometimes—for there's no end of their caprices—

They make them sing obscene or comic songs,
In which they took delight when clothed in flesh,
Nor thought them baits for Satan's iron mesh.

Sometimes they melt them as if they were metal ;

The melted fragments reunite once more ;
Sometimes they stew them in Megara's kettle,
Until with agonies intense they roar ;
Sometimes they whip them with a Stygian nettle,
That makes the blood gush out at every pore.
Ho—ho—well punished ; ye with souls like sewers,
Or, dirtier far, like quarterly Reviewers.

Mercy, they cry ; have mercy, spare us, Lord !

They may as well be silent—He'll have none ;
I don't see why He should ; in deed, thought, word,
The knaves did all the vice that could be done ;
The Angels, whose sad task 'tis to record
The courses which our dear disciples run,
Have prayed more earnestly than any priest,
From such disgusting work to be releast.

So that I do not wonder they petition

The Gods to whom they bend their seraph knees
For new employment, or complete dismissal,
From labour, where they've not a moment's ease ;
'Tis quite enough to drive them to sedition,
Particularly as they get no fees ;
But are obliged to toil by law and duty ;
We've no such taskwork here with wronged Old Sooty.

Come, and ascend this Mountain. What a rabble
Of naked men and women here are waiting !
What is it for? They gibber, grin, and gabble,
Like monkeys when they're solemnly debating ;
It brings to mind the nonsense talked at Babel,
When every man in different tongues was prating :
They seem in dreadful terror of some awful
Impending fate, which fills with groans each maw full.

Scarce have I said the words—a pestilent blast
Of fiery Whirlwind folds them in its clutches,
Bearing them quick as lightning to a vast
And stinking Lake, whose waters whoso touches
Ulcers enough to make God look aghast
Break out upon him ; nightman, slave, or duchess,
Washed in these noisome streams of Stygian colour,
Could scarcely have increase of rage and dolour.

The Devils you see first plunge them deeply down,
So that no inch of flesh escapes being wetted ;
And when they rise they crack them on the crown,
And sink them in once more, albeit much fretted —
But where's the use of anger here or frown ?

At these choice sports they play, till wholly fetid,
The souls emerge, encased in ulcerous clothing,
Which fills the most conceited with self-loathing.

These are the dandies, belles, and pretty fellows,
Coquets and coxcombs, fops and dancing-masters,
Whose only cares on earth, old legends tell us,
Were paints, cosmetics, ribands, wigs, court-plaisters,
Paddings, and perfumes—yet they never smell us
In these fine toys, nor dream they are Alastor's

(That is the Greek name of their Demon), till
They find themselves thus pitchforked from the hill.

Near them the African Lamiæ hiss and coil
Their serpent bodies into many a fold ;
Their nymphal faces shew no speck nor soil ;
Their snaky skins are dappled o'er with gold ;
Simoniacs form their perquisite and spoil,
They clasp them to their hearts as you behold,
And break their bones to pieces, gravely saying
That church preferment should be won by praying,

And not by money, interest, or scheming,
As we see happen every hour above ;
Where all indeed are good in outward seeming,
And preach with lips most redolent of love ;
Crafty as snakes—I hope I'm not blaspheming—
But scorning much the meekness of the dove,
They look upon their cure of souls as nothing,
But a smart trade that brings in food and clothing.

Mark this nice party fastened over flames
Of burning brimstone, by hot iron chains,
Heels up—heads down ;—to tell you half their names:
Would waste a year, and quite confound your brains,
The multitude's so great of knights and dames ;
You might as well expect to count the grains
Of sand on the sea-shore, as count these Spirits
Who're hanging here, rewarded for their merits.

Others suspended are by arms and hands,
Some by the hair above the brimstone steam,
Hot iron hooks through those—through these steel bands,
That chain them firmly, loud as they blaspheme

With whips of fire and serpent-wreathing brands
My people lash them, while they yell and scream,
Like frightened rats, confined in iron traps,
That see grimalkin lick her ravenous chaps.

How do you like this vast and arching sky
Of deepest black, and this resplendent Moon
That shines so very brilliantly on high
Above the plains? And yet her beam's no boon,
For all who underneath it, walk or lie,
Go raging mad, or fall in idiot swoon ;
And like wild cats or dogs continue roaring
Beneath these moonbeams, frenzy through them pouring.

I need not tell *you* 'tis no Moon at all,
But only semblance of a Moon put there
By my Lord Satan for the fools who fall
Into his spider-nets spread everywhere.
If you'll look closely you'll see thousands crawl
Beneath that cursèd light that seems so fair,
Who've lost their senses in that poisoned flood
Of light more deadly than the Centaur's blood.

Yonder's the great Red Dragon seen by John,
Which, in the final day shall rise from Hell,
And breathe a blast on every mother's son,
Who against Truth shall venture to rebel.
Seven heads he has, with golden crowns upon
Each fiery brow : his horns in height excel
;Sophia's mosque, or huge St. Peter's dome,
From one of which, 'tis said, on earth he'll roam.

See, the pestiferous Porcupines of Hell,
Burrowing beneath those trees of poisonous stench,

Where gluttons are tormented—sots who sell
 Their souls for a crammed paunch and filthy drench ;
 There is a story I should like to tell
 While we are flitting o'er this brimstone trench :
 'Twill shew you to what pleasant tricks The Snake
 Can turn, when wishing human game to take. .

I knew a lord, a wretched miser, noted
 For avarice and utter lack of charity ;
 He laughed when asked for alms by those devoted
 To holy lives and deeds ; it was a rarity
 To hear him *not* blaspheme : his name was quoted
 Through all the country for his strange barbarity ;
 The monks who lived close by were almost starving,
 While he the primest food was daily carving.

These pious men had nought but bread and herring,
 And so their thoughts ran up to Heaven from earth ;
 I thought it wrong ; and speedily transferring
 An artful Demon to the rich man's hearth,
 He stole thence roast, and boiled, and baked, averring
 To the poor monks, his master felt the dearth
 Of food they had endured, and thenceforth daily
 Would send them plenty by this trusted baillie.

The monks rejoiced, and feasted full as swine,
 Their thoughts were fixed on Heaven and God no more ;
 The Demon brought them loads of meat and wine ;—
 Each stuffed his maw with food enough for four ;
 Mass they neglected ; how to sleep and dine,
 And sup and lunch, and swill the dainty store,
 Alone employed their thoughts ; so mine they grew,
 And now we have them all in hell perdue.

The saintly priests of Rome have prayed the Virgin,
 In tones pathetic, to release these men ;
 But she, despite their daily, nightly urging,
 Refuses yet to drag them from this fen,
 From which they'll never find themselves emerging
 Until St. Peter's paid, and prayed to, when
 They'll have a famous chance of getting out ;
 And asking Mary what she was about ?

You'd scarce believe the influence of St. Peter
 With those above,—*that* Saint's indeed a trump ;
 He prays all day and night, in prose and metre,
 For all true Roman Catholics in a lump ;
 Had *you* been one, your soul would smell much sweeter
 Than now it does, and would have mounted plump
 To heaven, instead of being condemned for ever,—
 A wretched fate for one so mighty clever.

Here are those paynim giants named Zamzummin,
 Slain by the Ammonites—true Sons of Lot ;
 Here are the Scribes who paid full tithe of cummin,
 But all the Sacred Laws of God forgot ;
 Some of them freeze in Pots of Ice, and some in
 Vats of fire-bubbling lead are boiled quite hot ;
 A very loathsome crew transformed to shapes
 Of Rats, Toads, Weasels, Stoats, Skunks, Snakes, and Apes.

Here is the robber Cacus, vomiting smoke
 Pestiferous, and fire from his black throat ;
 As erst when Hercules began to choke
 The scamp well shrouded in his craggy moat ;
 Here are the crafty Cecils, each in cloak
 Of burning brass ; here's Caiaphas, whose vote

Condemned Messiah ; here is Pontius Pilate,
Whose well-washed hands our casuists here all smile at.

Here's Herod's daughter, by whose wicked wiles
John Baptist was beheaded one fine night ;
In an ice-lake she's buried, which encoils
The lady's neck about, sharp, cold, and tight :
And having thus enmeshed her in its toils,
The icicles so keen the lady bite,
Her head is slowly, surely eaten off,
While John's dark headless phantom seems to scoff.

The damned Ones circling us amid the air,
My noble brethren, look on us with wonder ;
Their curious shapes I notice make you stare ;
Were *I* not near, with fright you'd drop asunder ;
Their eyes are haggard, breathing pain and care,
Their frowning brows are scarred with horrid thunder ;
Such are Archangels, ruined, fallen, crushed :—
Yet these are they who once, with grandeur flushed,

Met the armed hosts of God, and fought them,—Fate
Denied the victory to us ; we fell—
No matter—*here* at least we hold our state ;
Worse 'twere to serve in Heaven than reign in Hell.
Yonder is Paymon, Spirit of Air, elate
With the fierce pride that urged him to rebel ;
On his two-headed Crocodile he hastes
With lightning speed across our hellish wastes.

Three-headed Baal and Bathan, Spirits of Fire,
Mounted on dromedaries winged with flame :

Marbas, the lion-faced, with eyes of ire ;
 Flauros, whose leopard looks his soul proclaim :
 Vapula, griffin-pinioned ; viperous Vire ;
 Bull-horned Hagenti, of colossal frame ;
 And wolf-fanged Procèl—these are they whose flight
 Exceeds in strength the fiercest whirlwind's might.

Each has his legions ; numbering in their bands
 Angels of all degrees, who in the Past,
 When they were fresh and pure from God's own hands,
 Shone with a gleam of beauty unsurpassed ;
 But when they drew and lifted up their brands
 Against the Father, and with Satan classed,
 Were hurled from Heaven, they lost their handsome shapes
 And so appeared like serpents, wolves, or apes.

Some are like mermaids, some night ravens seem ;
 Some bear the form of ram, thrush, peacock, snake ;
 Some are sea-monsters, some as she-wolves scream ;
 Some like wild harts, the tails of dragons take ;
 Some like the prodigies deformed that gleam
 On madmen's eyes at night who lie awake ;
 And all are of gigantic strength and size,
 And filled cropful with murders, frauds, and lies.

Do we repent our fall ? Why no, by heaven !
 We would not change the savage independence
 Of these Titanic realms, to be The Seven
 Who round God's thrones bow down in base attendance ;
 Men, when condemned, may raise their hideous steven
 Of lamentation—*we* in pride's ascendance
 Repent not—never *will* repent the day
 That set us free from God's despotic sway.

Happiness, but with slavery, is theirs,—

Our lot is exile—but unconquered pride
Sustains us in defeat :—their golden chairs
Crowns, harps, and hallelujahs we deride ;
Free as wild eagles, through the Prince of Air's
Unbounded realms on tempest-wings we ride :
We are not happy—well—we are not slaves,
Like Heaven's detested sycophants and knaves.

Giant Oromodon, the King of Fire,

On cataracts enthroned, in yonder den
You may behold ; his nostrils huge expire
Torrents of living flame, consuming men ;
The peaks of Andes that to heaven aspire
Shrink into hillocks near this denizen
Of Ancient Tartarus, whose dragon form
Seems ever teeming with a scorpion swarm,

Passing this frightful Crag, look sharp ; for here

Talus the brazen-bodied Giant cowers,
Flinging great mountain boulders far and near
Which fall like hot Gomorrah's brimstone showers.
Gods, what a rain of rocks was that !—keep clear—
One-eyed like Polypheme the scoundrel glowers
As if he smelt you, and if that were so
You'd scarcely pass this way without a blow.

I've known this fierce blood thirsty bugaboo

Watch a whole month for hapless bards in wait ;
So heartily he hates the rhyming crew,
Since Rhodian Apollonius dared to prate
About his doings :—if he scented you
There needs no prophet to predict your fate ;

I'm very sure he'd pound your skull to pieces :
His is a hate, that like a priest's, increases.

There—he has knocked a bishop into fits ;
Now he has floored a rabbi fresh from Jewry ;
A solemn Brahman next has felt his hits,
And now he whacks a dervish into fury.
Yon rock has smashed that moolah into bits
Who hardly hoped to meet this sort of houri
In the new Sphere to which he jumped from earth—
Of nymphs like those we're suffering from a dearth.

Here are the Demons, Gog and Magog, robed
In fire eternal, serpent-eyed and tailed ;
Within them such a mass of sin conglobed
The world will stink indeed when 'tis exhaled ;
In the Last Day, when by God's lances probed
They'll prove all rottenness, you'll see them nailed
On crosses of hot fire, where they must writhe
Convolved in agony, and no way blithe.

Here's Demogorgon of eternal gloom,
The Spirit of the Earth—a monstrous Imp
Of semi-serpent hideousness, to whom
We give up courtier, sycophant, and pimp :
Villains who fill the very largest room
We have in Hell. Though Justice slowly limp,
She never fails to overtake the prey
She hunts to Hadès from the light of day.

The daughters of Danäus stand before you,
Who killed their husbands on the wedding night :

But with the bloody tale 'twere vain to bore you :
 The beldames blush at their disgraceful plight,
 And look as if they would, but cann't, implore you,
 To free them from the toil which Hecat's spite
 Imposes, to draw water in deep buckets
 Bottomless, and for which they get no ducats.

They stand exposed to view upon a hill,
 From which the water is discharged ; and never
 Can they descend until their tubs they fill,
 Which seems, in truth, a very vain endeavour :
 However, 'tis commanded—they must swill
 The bitter draught for ever and for ever ;
 I wish some earthly wives were here to take
 A lesson, ne'er their husband's hearts to break.

You see that troop of Demons red and tawny,
 With hairy arms, bleared eyes, and sooty frames,
 Bearing huge hammers on their shoulders brawny,
 That oft have cooled the heat of well-fed dames ;
 Stout are the thews of Paddy, John, and Sawny,
 And each have held high place in Lady Fame's
 Bright roll, but there's not one would dare to tell
 His name to these, the Hammerers of Hell.

To hammer tyrant landlords, an employment,
 Which even the angels think a mark of honour,
 Is their sole task ; it gives them great enjoyment ;
 Woe to the soul, when they lay hands upon her !
 Stroke follows stroke ; heart-weariness or cloyment
 They never feel, but like stout Bishop Bonner
 Hunting new victims, hammer, hammer still,
 From year to year with right good arm and will.

Here's David Rizzio, Mary Stuart's minion,
A sleek Italian singer, false and sly :
That Queen herself, though in the Pope's opinion,
A perfect Saint, I'll shew you by and bye :
She traverses the wastes of our dominion
In plight so sad, it makes the Papists cry ;
But when *I* look at her, such rat-like craft
Is in her eyes, I've found I always laughed.

Here's Nostradamus, the renowned Magician,
Who bartered soul and body to black Hell,
Surrendering both to Lucifer's ignition,
The moment that the sexton tolled the bell ;
In the agreement there was this condition,
Suggested by some cunning monk in cell,
That whether buried in the church or out,
He should be ours without delay or doubt.

When he was dead this scheming, rascally priest
Buried him in the centre of the wall,
And so for some two hundred years at least
We missed him, though we had an Imp in call
From hour to hour : at length his labour ceased ;
The church itself in time began to fall ;
The coffin tumbled out one wintry night,
And so we got possession of the wight.

Yonder's a troop of Spirits whom we keep
To purge from sin some centuries or so,
They'll pass from us to heaven in a heap :
The Angels greatly will rejoice, I trow,
To have their souls as innocent as sheep
Thus saved from us, who, while they're here bestow

A double portion of infernal flame
To cleanse them clear from every speck of shame.

Sometimes a beautiful Phantom, clothed in white,
And wearing a gold crown that shines afar,
Brings them a little book, whose leaves of light,
Glitter more lustroously than any star ;
And shews them therein written, clear and bright,
The virtuous deeds that shall in time unbar
Hell's brazen gates, and send them forth to share
Immortal bliss with Angels heavenly fair.

And then the Demons, howling hoarse with ire
To see one beam of comfort to their prey,
Bring them a Book, whose characters of fire
Their guilty thoughts and acts on earth portray ;
Shocked, shamed, confused, they sink, while laughters dire
And blasphemous mockeries, recall the sway
Of Powers infernal, under whom they groan,
And must for ages yet, till they atone.

From us they pass to worlds of light and peace,
From which, as they progress in glorious thought,
They rise to other planets, like wild geese,
Till at the end so great a change is wrought
In their winged spirits, they obtain release
From all surveillance, and at length are brought
Into the presence of the Gods, from whence
They look on us no doubt with scorn intense.

Here is Carpocrates, the famed schismatic,
Who thought community of wives was best ;
And preached with eloquence the most dogmatic,

That no man had a chance of being blest
 Unless with every odious crime stigmatic,
 From murder down to thieving and incest :
 A soul, he said, entirely black with vice
 Had the most certain hope of Paradise.

I need not say how thoroughly we backed him
 In his belief—indeed from us it came—
 It brought him here of course, and so we sacked him,
 And tried to roast it out of him in flame :
 Peter and Paul came down and hewed and hacked him,
 But still the wittol swears it all the same ;
 And so do all his followers yet on earth,
 Who hold that sin's the second saving birth.

See yonder lovely Creatures with boar's ears,
 The wings of dragons, human arms and feet,
 Grim female features, which red gore besmears,
 And bellies like a festering winding-sheet ?
 Who could be angry with such pretty dears,
 Or interrupt their banquet rich and sweet ?
 They're feasting on a famous English parson,
 Whose madcap life religion was a farce on.

They are called Harpies—virgins of renown,
 Who figure handsomely in old mythology ;
 The perfume that they shed would knock you down,
 Even though surrounded by a whole anthology ;
 A curious compound they—black, white, red, brown,
 And many-limbed, like nothing in zoology ;
 Their talons are like scythes, and these they dig
 Fondliest through those who've fattened on tithe pig.

Here's Cæsar Borgia and his harlot mother,
Plunged in a Lake of Poison, fire and blood,
In whose dark stream they vainly try to smother
Their souls immortal ; but the noisome crud
Of mingled horror flies from one and t'other,
Leaving them still condemned to chew the cud—
Lucretia Borgia lies between the pair,
A murderess with a most bewitching air.

His Holiness, their sire, Pope Alexander,
You've seen already, where our Porcupines feed ;
Tossed in the flame like any salamander,
Despite his triple crown and papal bead :
A strange new farce to see a reverend hander
Of sacraments, *etcetera*, in such need ;—
I laughed immensely when I saw him drain
The flask he mixed to be another's bane.

Here is the Duke of Rochefoucault, whose book
Of maxims bares that sink the human heart,
From his own soul his Grace the portrait took,
And drew it like a skilful artisan.
Here's General Grouchy, who his flag forsook
At Waterloo, from which Napoleon ran :
Here's Bloody Mary, chained to a stake and scowling,
And Justice Jeffreys, like ten devils howling.

Here's poor Kit Marlow, slaughtered when half drunk,
By a rough bully in a tavern brawl.
You know the gentleman—you robbed his trunk
When you sat down of me and Faust to scrawl.
I therefore think you had no right to crunk
So very loudly, as if heaven would fall,

When Byron, as you said, stole Manfred's plot
From Faust, which, by the bye, the bard did not.

From *me* Kit learned the story of the Doctor ;
From *him* you stole me, body, bones, and soul,
And then pretended to be chief concocter
Of what you were not,—much to Marlow's dole ;
The choleric bard, indignant to be mockt, or
Stripped of his feathers, from his gully hole
Raised such a clamour as astounded Hell,
And rather injured *you*, as I know well.

Here's Mahasoor, the Demon, whom the Brahmins
Worship or fear,—the two are much alike ;
Ten thousand heads with mouths portending famines,
The monster has, with teeth like any pike ;
With fifty thousand eyes the Fiend examines
The wretches whom he guards, king, slave, and sheik ;
Shewing no favour, but tormenting all,
Though low for mercy at his feet they crawl.

Blue as deep night and flashing from his eyes
The terror of red fire, his neck is clothed
With thunders such as shake the Afric skies,
While blood in torrents gushes from his loathed
And loathsome mouths, like caverns in their size ;—
Could I but see this Ogre once betrothed
To some Infernal Demoness, and raise
A crop of Mahasoors, I'd sound his praise.

Below his throne his hideous angels wait,
The Onderahs and Dewtahs armed with flame,

Looking like ministers of awful Fate,
And fierce enough the Powers of Hell to tame :
Their souls are falsehood, cruelty, and hate,
Clothed in the darkness of a cloudy frame,
Obscure and horrible like volumed smoke,
That bursts from Hell when sorcerers invoke.

Here's Ahrimanes the Chaldean Devil
Guarding the Magi and their turbaned train,
Whom he reduces to their proper level ;
Duper and dupe alike are in his chain ;
The reverend humbugs beards and locks dishevel,
And howl repentant at his knees—in vain ;
He whelms them down in pits of liquid ice,
And asks them how they like their Paradise ?

Round him you see the Dowzaks and the Dews,
Fire-breathing, serpent-fanged, with frightful wings
And claws of flame which they delight to use,
And howl with glee when they behold their stings
Reek with the anguish of the knaves they bruise,
And whom they hurl as they would stones from slings,
Or fiery balls from Geyser's boiling well,
Across the blinding atmosphere of Hell.

Here's Saint Quirinus, whom Amantius flung
Into the foaming ocean for his creed,
And to make sure a heavy millstone hung
About his neck ; the Saint took little heed
Of the vile tyrant's tricks, but still among
The waves he floated on his stony steed ;
Preaching before the people all the while,
And looking at Amantius with a smile.

At last when our good Saint the day had spent,
And found he did not sink, he grew afraid
The Lord was not to take him then content,
And that the martyrdom for which he prayed
Was not so near as suited his intent ;
He 'gan the Virgin Mary to persuade
To sink the stone and drown him : with great pains
At last he got his wish, but not the gains.

For Astaroth, a Devil whom we all
Respect most highly, happened to be near,
And for the joke's sake thought he would instal
The Saint with some of the same kidney here ;
So flying by, he kicked him like a ball
So very deep into the sea, we fear
The Water-demons found him on their manor,
And so presumed he fought beneath their banner.

How it has happened that we have him still
I do not know, but probably he suffers
With us the pains of purgatorial drill,
Which squeezes him, and like a pair of snuffers
Makes his light shine the brighter ; tears or skill
Avail him nought at present ; Satan's cuffs
Detain him till he grows intensely pure,
And then we shall not keep him, I feel sure.

'Tis true the Pope of Rome has canonized him,
And proved he is in Heaven—by a bull ;
'Tis also true the monks have idolized him,
For several years, and sought mankind to gull ;
But these are shams, and have no way disguised him
With us, who hold that maxim to the full

Of Saint Augustine : *Multi adorantur*
In ard qui in igne comburantur.

Yonder's Saint Benedict, whom once I used
 To visit in a little blackbird's shape :
 Disturbing him whene'er I saw he mused
 On pious thoughts, until he stared agape ;
 Sometimes the holy man I so accused
 Of horrid crimes in likeness of an ape,
 He rolled himself in nettles, thorns, and briers,
 Which have a mighty force as purifiers.

What light gleams yonder, like a star of gold,
 Amid the encircling darkness ? Does it move ?
 Or are we dazzled by what we behold ?
 The solar light would much this place improve.
 This is the Ram, of which such tales are told,
 The golden Ram of Phryxus and his love,
 Who gave a name to Hellespont—the Beast
 Is, as you see, indeed superbly fleeced.

This Ram renowned, the pride of ancient story,
 Galloped amid the crystal heavens so well
 The winds could not o'ertake him ; so his glory
 Has been the theme of many a poet's shell ;
 Who sang his fame in flights as high and soary
 As those he took, when beauteous Hellè fell
 From his gold back, and sank into the Ocean—
 A fair-faced thief, who robbed her sire Bœotian.

Phryxus, more lucky than his sister, landed
 At Colchos, being advised by the sage Ram,

And locked his treasure up ; then basely handed
The gallant Beast on which through air he swam
Up to the priests, who burned him, but demanded
The gorgeous fleece ; they gave it with a damn
And looks ill-omened. The ungrateful miser
Was murdered ; thus was Nemesis chastiser,

Of an abandoned wretch, whose thirst for pelf
Made him commit a vile and treacherous deed.
The gods, who loved the Ram and loathed the Elf,
Threw Phryxus to him as a worthless weed :
Aries since then has well avenged himself,
And tears the wretch as wild wolves tear some steed
That wanders from his herd, and sees too late
The wolfish pack with eyes and fangs of hate.

What has become of Hellè is not known ;
She dwells, no doubt, with other thieving wenches,
Where she pours forth her melancholy moan
'Mid fires and devils, worms and snakes, and stanches ;—
The Ram's a bachelor still, and lives alone,
His sole amusement the terrific wrenches
He gives his former Rider through the air ;—
And thus you have the story of the pair.

What think you of this place ? a Pit it seems,
In length and breadth like some outspreading sea,
But deep as hell, for so the ascending gleams
Of flickering flame would make it seem to be ;
Boiling up from beneath in scorching streams
That roar and howl like Devils at jubilee ;
While the broad flanks of this Infernal Vale
Are lashed by storms of deadly snow and hail.

The summit towers amid the clouds ; dark, deep,
And terrible is the valley down its side ;
Girt in by naked rocks which form a keep,
Where thick as locusts the stark Shadows hide ;—
Lo ! the volcanic fires that blaze and sweep
Tumultuously along with angry tide
Of red-hot lava, spouting, fuming, stinking,—
Even at this distance I can see you shrinking.

The sides are covered o'er on left and right,
With screaming myriads of damned human souls,
On whom the hurricane, like some withering blight,
Descends, till o'er them a fierce whirlpool rolls
Of coldest ice ; from such an awful plight
They ask of heaven a peck of blazing coals,
And heaven grants their wish, and flings them down
Deep in the flaming Pit to kick and drown.

Engulfed within the seething waves of fire,
They wish once more to feel the' dreaded cold,
And Heaven most kindly yields to their desire,
Flinging them back to their ice-haunts of old ;
Scarce are they shivering in that frosty mire,
When love, more fierce than the fierce love of gold,
For their late lodgings in the burning Pit
Seizes them next, and Heaven grants them it.

Thus are they tossed for ever, from hot flame
Into as burning oceans of sharp ice ;
And then from ice to fire :—a pleasant game
For those who hold the reins in Paradise :
No interval of rest have they ; the same
Quick alternations come as fast as dice

Leap from the box in some experienced hand,
In, out—out, in—in this the promised land.

The Pit itself abounds with hungry caymen,
Exhaling fire accursed from tristful jaws,
Their monstrous throats gorge clerics, monks, and laymen,
As rapidly as whirlpools swallow straws ;
Malicious demons whip them on like draymen,
So that their scythe-like grinders never pause,
But still *chop, chop*, they snap up souls, *chop, chop*,
Faster than winter raindrop follows drop.

Englishmen, who are strange but knowing fellows,
Call folks of this kind, trimmers—that means knaves ;
They hang suspended, as, old legends tell us
Mohammed's tomb in Mecca's holy caves,
Between the earth and heaven—the Gods get jealous
Of such divided 'legiance in their slaves,
And in ill humour ram them down in Hell,
A thing which pleases me and Satan well.

We do our best to please them, blowing hot
And cold, and hot and cold, and hot again ;
But neither satisfies—the scalding pot
Of fire displeases ; so does ice and rain ;
Creatures so discontented with their lot
I never met ; you see they still retain
Their ancient fickleness, as much as ever,
Though Satan use for them his best endeavour.

Chief among these is Marlborough's famous duke,
A compound strange of avarice and cunning ;
Who spent his days in scorn of God's rebuke,
One half in cheating, t'other half in gunning ;

Behold his well-patched coat and old peruke,
And vulpine eye, *your* eye so slyly shunning ;
And hear him still howling for blood and gold,
His gods, while in the alternate torrents rolled.

We pass this Region now, and reach another,—
A vast interval of darkness this ;
Rises a sulphurous stench enough to smother
An angel crossing o'er the foul abyss.
Luckily few come here ; the Blessèd Mother
Keeps the sweet babes from danger ; so they miss
The desperate chance of getting nicely stifled,
Besides the certainty of being rifled.

For there are rascally Demons in these quarters,
Who shew no mercy to a seraph strayed ;
Sometimes they pound them in gigantic mortars ;
Or mince them small with Satan's keenest blade.
Sometimes they serve them as the Khan of Tartars
Serves those who fall into his ambushade,
And send them back with circumstance disgraceful,
Weeping such tears as I've seen fill a casefull.

Thick globes of murky flame from yonder Chasm
Ascend, like bubbles from a schoolboy's pipe,
Each bearing in its sphere a shrieking phasm,
Held firmly bound within its fiery gripe.
See ! how it writhes, as if in deadly spasm
Beneath a terror-breathing Fury's stripe ;
They rise and sink again like exhalations,
And much, methinks, against their inclinations.

Lo ! where the Lion of Nemæa rushes,
Swifter than eagles, mightier than thunder

That God hurls down, when infidels he crushes
 Who tear the veil of sacred things asunder,
 Heavily o'er the howling damned he brushes,
 Lashing his mighty flanks, and trampling under
 His vengeful talons, perjurers and liars,
 Whom you see chained on beds of burning briars.

Here's Peter Aretine, surnamed Divine,
 Who libelled every man on earth below,
 But spared his God, because—so runs the line—
 His God, the scoundrel said, he did not know ;
 Here's Julio Romano in the brine
 Of thickest fire, that folds him round like dough ;
 And while he welters in the flame, the brood
 Of grinning Goblins hand him filth for food.

Crossing this River, branching from the Styx,
 And black and putrid like its parent stream,
 We see an Island, bright and shining ; fix
 Your eyes upon it—start not—'tis no dream.
 You look as 'twere but one of my best tricks.
 But 'tis no trick at all. A golden gleam
 Plays on the water's surface from that Isle,
 Where three enchanting Virgins sing and smile.

Goethe.

Their hyacinthine hairs in fragrance flow
 Adown their necks, as silver pillars white ;
 Their panting bosoms outshine mountain snow,
 Or lilies opening to the morning light.

Mephistopheles.

Nay, my good fellow, turn your eyes below
 Their waists, and see what meets your anxious sight :

A feathered belly, ending in a tail,
Large as a line-of-battle ship's foresail.

Goethe.

'Tis false—I see a waist and tapering limbs
More dazzling white than ivory, or the moon,
When sailing in the purple heaven, she dims
The brightest stars ; the rosy light of June
Beams from their slightest motion ; heavenly hymns,
Breathed to the music of the sweet kanoon,
Salute my ravished ears—they smile, they sing ;
Oh ! bear me hither, on thine outspread wing.

Mephistopheles.

'Tis certain, Sin has mystified your eyes,
Or else you'd ne'er commit mistakes like these ;
The Witches whom you thus would idolise,
And worship, doubtless on your bended kness,
Are monsters, fed on blood, who thus disguise
Their bestial ugliness 'neath masques that please :—
They are the Seirens—oh, sweet sir, you start !
The blood runs frightened to your throbbing heart.

They live alone upon this barren Island,
Seeming to sinners as they seem to you,
Maids of immortal beauty ; shameful guile and
Besotted ignorance tempt the gazing crew
Of dead voluptuaries—they leave the high land
Where we now stand, and make for yonder stew

Gloating already in a dream of rapture—
They wade across, and form an easy capture.

You know, of course, the story of Ulysses,
Told by that wandering tramp and varmint Homer ;
When he passed by those naked wicked misses,
They sang a song to win that wily roamer,
Inviting him to share their dainty kisses—
When he, whose name of “ wise ” was no misnomer,
Waxed his men’s ears, and tied his body fast,
Both arms and legs, to the swift galley’s mast.

And so he heard their beauty-breathing strain :
Glorious Ulysses, honoured star of Greece,
Turn hither your light bark ;—they sang in vain,
The charmers might as well have held their peace ;
Enraged at thus being treated with disdain,
The silly ladies, like the silliest geese,
Drowned themselves, and at once descended here,
Where they’re no better off, I greatly fear.

Scylla, the ugliest prodigy of all
The monsters, male and female, we have seen,
Stands right before you, covered with the scall
Of leprosy, which Circè the venene
Infused into the crystal waterfall
Where the poor beauty bathed ; for, like a queen
Of loveliness, she trod the earth, until
Doctored by Circè’s powerful poisonous pill.

Scarce had she leaped into the silver bath,
Letting the shining waters kiss her waist,

When she perceived her rival's mortal wrath,
Who feared she felt inclined to grow unchaste
With one she loved herself ; to close the path
To such proceedings, and to keep straightlaced
Poor Scylla's modesty, from head to feet
She changed her to a Monster most complete.

Her body was transformed to fierce black dogs,
Which barked incessantly with maddened jaws ;
Twelve legs instead of two, shaped like a hog's,
She then beheld, with nails as sharp as saws ;
Six heads grew next, each uglier than a frog's,
Protruding slimy serpents from their craws,
And hissing dreadfully their venoms round——
Whereat dismayed, she plunged in, and was drowned.

Since then the lady helps to punish those
Who poison people through revenge or lust,
Or avarice or hate ; her fury grows
Fiercer the more into her den we thrust :
When Circè fell into her last repose,
And came to hell, we gave her, as was just,
To Scylla, who dissected her all over,
More cruelly than any Smithfield drover.

Ascending farther up these slimy banks,
We stand upon a bleak broad Ocean shore,
That stretches onward, outward ; shrilly twanks
The hoarse and sable wave, whose ceaseless roar
Resounds like wild hogs muttering in their franks ;
The strand is dense with poisonous hellebore !
Mephitic fumes boil up from the black waves,
That howl like she wolves 'gainst those Iron Caves.

And myriad million boats of every size
 And shape from Noah's ark to Nelson's ship,
 Laden as thick with men as earth with lies,
 Over its moaning billows tack or clip
 In darkness ever ; winds blow, tempests rise,
 And like lashed demons the deep whirlpools rip,
 Letting their fury forth, and rather frightening
 The pallid ghosts, who pray to Heaven for lightning.

In yonder boundless Lake of Blood, behold
 Those things called "heroes" by the sons of earth,
 But by the wise and true dubbed murderers bold,
 And wisely dubbed, for they are hell's own birth,
 Cast by the Devil in his blackest mould,
 And sent from hence as if in drunken mirth ;
 Not cursed, but worshipped by insane mankind,
 Who seem to pride themselves on being stone blind.

The fathomless ocean of red gore in which
 They swim, is that which while on earth they shed ;
 The common stabber in the street or ditch,
 The grand assassin for whom millions bled,
 Conqueror, bravo, bandit, poor and rich,
 The wretch in rags, the villain with crowned head,
 Are classed together in the ensanguined sea,
 With a sublime contempt for pedigree.

The dazzling Roman in whose word seemed fate,
 The Turk whose arm aspired to shake the world,
 The Gaul who fulminated at the Roman gate,
 The Greek who saw his flag o'er Ind unfurled,
 The Egyptian king-drawn in his throne of state,
 The Persian, Scythian, Tartar, Frank—all hurled

Down in the waves of human blood, lie stretched,
Mixed with the shabbiest creatures e'er Jack Ketched.

The Macedonian madman and the Swede,
Jonathan Wilde, the bloodhound Wallenstein,
Timour, John Thurtell, the all-conquering Mede,
With several cut-throats from the yellow Rhine,
Lie in one bloody sewer. Could Adam's seed
Now living see what meets *your* eyes and mine,
They'd form a strange but true idea of glory,
"Conquerors" and "heroes" who shine forth in story.

The Powers Sublime enthroned on countless stars,
Judge men by motives ; conquerors who win
Empires by blood, and drive their fiery cars
Of death o'er millions, sons of hell and sin ;
And thieves, who, braving handcuffs and jail-bars,
Prig watches, fogles,—a gold ring or pin,
Are all the same to them, whose eyes divine
Between the guilt of each discern no line.

To God a watch and kingdom are as one,
The world itself is but a mote in space,
A drop of sweat thrown from the central sun ;
So small, I wonder that it holds a place
In thought Omnipotent—I don't mean fun
Or jest, so smooth your courtly faithless face—
The Godhead in these men no difference sees,
No more than you in million lice or fleas.

A round of Stilton cheese o'errun with mites
Would seem an atom in a Titan's hand ;

Yet these, like men, feel love and love's delights,
And some obey, and some too have command :
Hatred and gluttony, and feasts and fights,
They have in that immense and boundless land ;
Think you the mighty Titan sees one shade
Of difference 'twixt their Cæsar and their Cade ?

Lo; where the Centaurs ride in troops, like towers
Of moving brass, and trampling as they come,
Half-horse, half-man ; as pitiless lightning showers
Fire on the earth. and men and beasts lie dumb,
They hurry onward ever ; Vengeance lowers
In every eye ; the Devils themselves succumb
Before those marvellous Monsters of old time,
Clothed in thick darkness, magic, might, and crime.

Conquerors and conquering, forth they go commanded
To wreak God's vengeance upon tyrants slain ;
The heroes brazen hearted and steel-handed,
Whom Satan crowned, and in whose bloody train
Famine and Fire and Plague and Hell were banded,
Are ranged before them on yon murky plain,
Fettered like wolves.—The Centaurs charge—behold,
The chained are crushed to atoms ere 'tis told.

Antæus, the black Lybian Giant, known
For piling up a pyramid of brains
Of those, who wrestling him were overthrown,
When here he came, implored in moving strains
The Judge who sits supreme upon the throne,
To place him sentry o'er this breed of Cains ;—
The Judge consented, and the Negro keeps
Watch o'er the murderers, and never sleeps.

Near him is Antichrist, a savage Fiend,
 Arrayed in purple, scarlet, gold, and gems,
 But still most frightful, howsoever screened ;
 His splendid robes conceal not the foul wems
 Imprinted on him, when the Furies yeaned
 Their monstrous birth, whom even Hell contemns
 So odious is this Demon-Infant, doomed
 To reign on earth, and see it fire-entombed.

Goethe.

I see you do not spare your own relations,
 They stand, methinks, but low in your esteem ;
 You even step aside to make occasions
 To hold them up to ridicule supreme.

Mephistopheles.

I like a spice of sarcasm in narrations ;
 Yet love the vagabonds, although I seem
 To have them in contempt ; you surely know
 By this, I sneer alike at friend and foe.

Why should I not ?—what care I but for ruin ?
 What pleases *me* but sin, disaster, death ?
 I growl and grin, and gnash my teeth like Bruin,
 And shall, while God allows me hated breath.
 Why don't He rise and cut me two and two in ?
 And sweep me ever from this blasted heath ?
 I ask not—want not life—and if *He* spares,
 His children shall grow mine, not Heaven's heirs.

Here's Simon Magus, hobbling lame through fire,
 With broken legs and many a piteous howl ;

You know how Paul and Peter served the liar,
 When Nero, who made all good Christians growl,
 Commanded him, at Holy Paul's desire,
 To shew what sacred might lay in his cowl ;
 The sorcerer prayed to me, and so I sent him,
 A crew of cozening Satans to content him.

They raised him in a fiery chariot high,
 To Nero's great astonishment ; but Paul,
 Who smelled the brimstone from the Imps so high,
 Declared it was no miracle at all.
 So he and Peter raised a mighty cry,
 Whereat the frightened Devils let him fall ;
 And in the smash poor Simon broke his bones,
 Which makes him limp along these fiery stones.

Nero, the most capricious man that ever
 Sat on the throne, where now our Vicar's seated,
 Was much disgusted at the Seer's endeavour ;—
 He swore by Styx that he would not be cheated :
*Those rogues, quoth he, who think themselves so clever,
 Will find in me a man, who won't be treated
 Like simple Jews, or simpler Christian fools,
 Of whom these conjurers make slaves and tools.*

So ordering three mighty wooden crosses
 To be fixed up, the wretched man pronounced,
 Without the least pretence of legal process,
 Sentence of death : in vain St. Paul announced
 That he and Peter (whose voice stuck in his *fauces*)
 Were foes, not friends to Simon ;—and denounced
 The sentence as unjust : the hangman fell
 Sent *them* to Paradise and *him* to hell.

Near him is Helen whom our Magus carried
 About Judæa, in his heavenly mission ;
 A lady whom from off Tyre's streets he married
 That she might help him in his imposition ;
 Robbing and swindling all with whom he tarried,
 At last they tumbled headlong to perdition,
 And here they still endeavour to persuade
 Peter and Paul to join their gainful trade.

Here's Flavius Josephus, so notorious
 For all the shams he crams into his history,
 To make his people's peccadilloes glorious,
 And deck their annals with Jehovian mystery :
 But truth o'er falsehood's in the end victorious,
 Despite the Sanhedrim and courts consistory :
 So Joe is now considered by the wise,
 A great adept in sacred truths, called lies.

Those shocking Monsters which in yonder waste
 Suck the dead Spirits to their inmost vitals,
 Are Vampires called,—I don't admire their taste,
 But Satan does, from whom they get their citals
 To torture slaveholders who here are placed,
 And thus receive their merited requitals ;
 The negroes, whom they whipped to death on earth,
 Like certain grubs, receive a second birth,

And into Satan's Vampires pass, a change
 Which much delights the sable Sons of Ham ;
 For ever o'er the pits of Hell they range,
 Each seeking him who whilom used to lamm
 Their hides on earth until they got the mänge ;
 In vain their former owners try to sham ;

The Vampires scent them out where'er they hide,
And take revenge on every servicide.

Those in the stinking steam you see, quite nude,
Red-hot, and baked, are shot up like sky-rockets
From out the Infernal Well ; completely stewed,
They tumble down again like heavy blockheads ;
These were all politicians—'twould be rude
Perhaps to class them with low-bred pickpockets ;
But after long experience of them both,
To name the greater rogue I should be loth.

Look at these wretches lying on their backs,
And made soft cushions of by fiery Dragons,
Who tear them with their teeth as sharks tear blacks ;
Toads perch on others, huge as farmers' wagons,
And stick their beaks into them like an axe,
Sucking their black blood out like wine from flagons ;
Round others snakes are coiled, and with their fangs
Fixed in their vitals, cause unpleasing pangs.

Wise courtiers these, who played their several parts
Vicious and criminal, in Virtue's mask,
Veiling in smiles of beauty hellish hearts,
Like poison in a finely-painted flask ;
The next are those who, good by fits and starts,
Sometimes receive relief from their worst task,
And are put here to make the torment greater
Of their next neighbours in yon boiling Crater.

Yonder you see at least ten billion Spits,
With souls whom Devils baste with boiling metal ;

They kick like men in fierce convulsive fits,
 And there are none to cure them when they get ill.
 We ram them into boiling baths called Sitz,
 Being very anxious such good friends to fettle ;
 But get no thanks : their horrid passions rise,
 And make us in amazement rub our eyes.

They scratch and screech, and kick and howl—in vain
 They rave with madness 'gainst our mocking Sprites,
 Who simply plunge the bawlers in again,
 And take them through their full baptismal rites.
 A den of serpents famished and insane
 Would show a lot of very curious sights,
 But if you'll take *my* word not half so pleasant,
 Because not half so deadly as the present.

For what are serpents', tigers', wolves', hyenas'
 Passions compared to men and women's? What
 Order of horridest beasts for blood so keen as
 Man for his brother's when his rage is hot ?
 Trace back his history hence until Mæcænas,
 And thence to Adam, who the race begot ;
 Men are such brothers as was Cain to Abel ;
That part of Holy Writ is fact, not fable.

Here is a River of Blood, where prodigals lie,
 Deeply immersed in thickened fire and gore ;
 The stench pollutes the air and mounts on high,
 While hissing snakes infest its thorny shore ;
 The wretches plunged within in terror cry,
 To heaven for mercy—hark the fiendish roar
 Of rage and pain ; the ears of Heaven are deaf
 To all their wolf-like clamours for relief.

Beside its banks the hundred-headed Dragon,
Hunting through Hell Alfonso, who shut up
The paradise-souled of song—without a rag on ;—
This ducal torturer is condemned to sup
Full of our horrors : time, methinks, must wag on
But very slowly with this princely pup :—
To aggravate his torture he was shown
Tasso in Heaven on an emerald throne.

Here is Saint John of Sinai, unto whom
A horrid sinful woman once confessed,
Her vices wrapped her soul in such deep gloom,
She never had a single moment's rest ;
She dreaded every hour some awful doom
Would whelm her into Satan's burning nest ;
She dared not utter what she had committed ;
Write it, quoth he, *on paper*, and she writ it.

The saint some penance gave her, and then died ;
The woman fearing that the piece of paper
On which her crimes she wrote, to light might glide,
And sorry that she let it thus escape her,
Went to his grave, and wept, and prayed, and sighed,
And offered up a consecrated taper,
Beseeching John to give the writing back,
Or else her character might go to wrack.

She groaned and knelt for several months ; at last
Saint John came forth ; two bishops in his train ;
Take back your paper, says the Ghost, and cast
It to the woman ; *sin not so again* ;
They vanished ; the repentant held it fast,
And opened it, and found the constant rain

Of tear-drops from her eyes had washed it white,
And all her wickedness was pardoned quite.

Here is Saint Francis, whom I bothered long,
And tempted in the wilderness, displaying
The joys voluptuous of carnal wrong,
And loud against austerities inveighing,
Until he loosed the mighty bull's hide thong
Which bound his waist, and like a savage flaying
His priestly muscles, made the blood run down
In torrents to his ancles from his crown.

At other times, when he began to preach,
I sent a troop of swallows round his tub,
To twitter, chatter, splutter, clatter, screech,
From every rustling bough and waving shrub ;
The wretched man in vain essayed to teach,
While the base birds continued their hubbub ;
At last he prayed, and heaven changed the birds
To christians—quick as milk is changed to curds !

Here's Peter's Dens, who wrote a horrid book
About confession, to instruct the priests
In mysteries of marriage ; since the brook
Of Alpheus flowed with dregs of men and beasts,
From the Augèan Stalls when Hercules took
That labour on him, giving fishes feasts,
There has not been a dirtier stream of filth,
Except his neighbour's, Doctor Sanchez, spilth.

In yonder Iron Cage is Saint Augustine,
One of the finest gods of modern Rome,

Whose Popes in him put full religious trust in,
 As you may read in many a priestly tome :
 You stare, I see, to find him firmly thrust in
 The cell he tenants, like a wicked gnome,
 But half a dozen things we'll call mistakes,
 Have sent him here, for which of course he bakes.

One, I remember, was to this effect,
 That in the Ethiopian land he saw
 With his own eyes, a certain Pagan sect
 Of people without head, or face, or craw,
 Eyes in their breasts through which they looked direct,
 And mighty mouths their savage food to chaw ;
 A lucky Saint, I'm sure, such sights to view ;—
 But Satan did not think the story true.

And so he caged him in this well-barred cell
 With one of the same kidney, Irenæus,
 Another Saint (we've millions here in Hell)
 Who likewise said—*ignoscat eum Deus !*
 That in his travels somewhere, near some dell,
 He saw Lot's wife in salt—*non sermo meus*—
 But gravely swore to by this Saint of glory,
 Whose odour's so divine in Roman story.

Heigho ! Heigho ! could I but count the heap
 Of tales veracious which these men of God
 Gravely propound, and give unto their sheep,
 Or donkeys, rather, who devoutly nod
 Assent to all they hear, and lull asleep
 God-given reason as it were a clod ;—
 And publish them unto the world, i'faith
 The world's Seven Wonders would receive an eighth.

Cormorants, vultures, hawks, and hungry owls,
 Devour their sacred vitals, hearts, and livers,
 Tongues, lungs, and other parts that fatten fowls ;—
 See how they tear their flesh away in slivers,
 They evidently have no fear of cowls,
 Or else they'd hardly munch those sin-forgivers,
 Who having raked, raped, robbed, crammed, drank, and lied,
 Into owls' meat most properly subside.

The papists, when they come to Hell, at first
 Think what they see is all a base delusion,
 And won't believe that popes in paradise nurst,
 And cardinals, could come to such confusion ;
 Fired with the sight for vengeance dread they thirst,
 Till slowly by degrees, their brains' obtusion,
 Or dulness rather, wears away, and then
 They find their Holinesses were but men.

I wish to Styx you mortals would read history,
 Sacred, profane, and eke ecclesiastical,
 'Twould serve to clear up many a scheming mystery
 That makes you act like knaves or dupes fantastical ;
 At present, all that's done in courts consistory,
 Vaticans, churches, makes enthusiastical
 Or mad the great majority of people,
 Who think that God dwells only in a steeple—

Who think if men write *Rev.* before their names,
 They're straight transformed from sinners into saints,
 And that when nuns are made of giggling dames,
 They're blessèd virgins, since they don't use paints ;
 Egad ! they little dream what waggish games
 They play to make amends for some restraints ;

Dante, Erasmus, Rabelais, who knew well
Their wanton tricks, unscrupulously tell.

Here's the Tenth Leo, whose rash exclamation,
Quantas nobis divitias comparavit
Ista de Christo fabula ! gives negation

To what the monks will swear on affidavit,
That Rome alone can give the true salvation,
To earth, by Christ himself bequeathed, to save it :
For if the Pope thinks Jesus is a jest,
Papists must think so too, or be unblest.

For since the Pope's infallible, and cann't err,
And since his people must believe the Pope,
The consequences plain you must infer,
However theologues may write in trope,
That whatsoe'er his Holiness aver
They're bound to swallow : nor presume to grope
Into things, to find out, if they are good,
Or most unwholesome for their daily food.

Here also is that black right reverend bull
Called Mnevis, which they shrined in Heliopolis,
Feeding the holy animal as full
As they do bishops in John Bull's metropolis ;
Here's the Egyptian scapegoat, on the stool
Of penance, for the vices of the populace ;
Who put their crimes committed through the year
Upon this scapegoat, and so sent him here.

O ye good Gods, how pleasant 'tis to sin,
To rake, to drink, to rob, to cheat, to slay,

To kill and plunder alien, kith and kin,
 To mock God's ten commandments night and day,
 And then before the incoming year begin
 To wash one's dark enormities away,
 By putting *all* upon the scapegoat's head
 Who comes to hell for you, and roasts instead.

Here's Saint Engendus, whose white leathern braces,
 Have worked miraculous cures in childbed pains ;
 I could relate so many thousand cases,
 As would convince a Heathen's hardened brains ;
 The facts are sworn to in so many places,
 And have produced the Church such golden grains ;
 That only sceptics the most wicked dare,
 To hint that priests will rather rashly swear.

Here's Saint Macarius, who killed a gnat
 That stung him in the back, but so repented
 The deed, he stripped as naked as a sprat,
 And ran to Scetè's marshes, then frequented
 By flies with nails that pierced like any cat,
 And there he stayed till he was so indented
 With horrid blisters from the head to heel,
 The angels clapped their hands to see his zeal.

Here is Abdallah, called the Hypocrite,
 Who on his deathbed humbly asked Mohammed
 To let him have his shirt (a shroud unfit
 For such a rogue, who always used to sham it).
 The prophet stripped, and lo, he lies in it ;
 It saves him not, however close he cram it
 Round his red carcass, as if it were armour—
 Dalilah's near him, Samson's treacherous charmer.

The Bridge close by, that arches o'er the River,
Whose whirling eddies, black and foul roll on,
Till, lost in utter darkness, is receiver
Of many confident knaves, that tread upon
Its paths delusive, till they sink for ever
Into the boiling billows, and are gone
The way all Spirits go who try to cross,
Forgetting that their souls are so much dross.

We saw this River when we first descended,
Or part of it, at least ; upon its banks
Poplars and platans planted thick protended,
While scritch-owls howled in chorus and in ranks ;
Its waters bear so many poisons blended,
Disease comes here to fill her numerous tanks
With the corruptions which on earth she rains
On town-bred bucks, who scorn the rustic plains.

Under that River's bottom lies deep hell,
Over the river hangs the Mystic Bridge,
Thin as the finest web that forms the cell
Of the poor spider ;—weak, the smallest midge
Can shatter it to fragments ; strange to tell,
I've seen ten thousand Spirits on its ridge,
Standing securely ; but they were of those
To whom not Lucifer's self dare shew his nose.

But the choice knaves whose fall I named at first,
Secure in pride, with faith perhaps in masses,
Buoyed up too by their priests, whose lies accurst
Send here a number that belief surpasses,
Rushing across, with a most holy thirst
For paradise and pleasure, slip like asses

Into the mirky gulf, and, shrilly squalling
For angel's aid, are caught by Devil's falling.

Deep in this Chasm of frowning rock the Sphynx
Burrows, and still propounds deceitful riddles
To whatsoever luckless Shadow slinks
Beside her cave. If answered well, she tiddles
The flattered ghost, but if the fellow blinks
The question, and tries artful tricks, and wheedles
To 'scape her, woe indeed to him! He finds
That chains of strongest steel she round him binds.

Her head and breasts are like a virgin's fair,
Her wings are like a vulture's, black and broad ;
Her body, like a dog's, is shagged with hair,
Her tail is like a serpent's, fanged with fraud ;
Her paws are lion-like, and well can snare—
Unhappy he whom once their talons clawed ;
Her voice is like a woman's, sweet and soft,
Or angel's,—which you poets hear so oft.

Beneath her Cave boil up those monstrous cauldrons,
With liquid copper, pitch, and sulphur filled ;
The fire beneath exhausts some million chaldrons
Of coal, supplied by Gnomes, an ancient guild,
To whom we're much indebted, it would scald one's
Liver to see how those within are grilled ;
And so you'll take my word, of all who died
On earth than these are none more hotly fried.

Some of them, as you see, are rammed downright
Into the bowels of the lava liquor,

Having a load of sins which ears polite

Were never made to hear ; these sink much quicker
Than those whose necks and breasts and knees you might

Discern, if you were near enough : the vicar,
For instance, does not sink so deeply down
As master dean, or him in lawn-sleeve gown.

But thus for ever they must lie immerst,

Crying and howling in infernal chorus ;
From morn till night, from night till morn, a curst

And horrid gang, whose owl-like screechings bore us ;
The only thing amusing is at first

To see the new comers with tears implore us ;
Like Dives, for a drop of water, which
We hand them scalding hot from the next ditch.

We sometimes send one of our archest Imps,

Tricked out with snowy wings and mild blue eyes,
Like angels ; when these howlers catch a glimpse

Of the sly rogue, with desperate haste they rise
To catch him ; not so zealously do pimps

Pursue young maids, as these to grab the prize ;
Who, after teasing them a thousand ways,
Flies off, and leaves the germs of awful frays.

For after he has vanished, there begins

A sanguinary battle between those
Who thought he came to rescue them from Sin's
Close stocks, and would have, had not some, their foes,
Stood up to claim a chance ; from kicking shins
They come at last to rounds of bloody blows,

And tear each other's quivering limbs to atoms,
As I've seen Mansfield by a speech of Chatham's.

These are Egyptian priests, whose life was but
A motly mass of lying and blaspheming ;
Cowardice, lewdness, ribaldry, and smut,
Gluttony, bestial appetites, and scheming :
For these pure pranks the hierophants are put
Into these pots ; and you can hear them screaming
Loud to Osiris, Apis, Pan, and Isis,
In whose high names they practised all the vices.

'Tis a strange thing, and funny too, to find
Men from the earliest age to this, the best
And purest ever seen among mankind,
Committing deadliest crimes with purest zest,
When they can o'er them throw a holy blind,
Which they call true religion ; north, south, west,
And east, we see them in the name of God
Doing the Devil's dirtiest work—'tis odd.

Oh ! how I love all goodly pious folks
Who go to Church so reverently on Sundays,
And by humility their Maker coax
To overlook the doings of their fun-days,
Strange that such prayer the votary never chokes—
They recommence their favourite sins on Mondays,
And keep that great commandment all their lives,
Hate ye your neighbours—love your neighbours' wives.

Tell me a crime that has not been committed
Under the heavenly sanction of God's name

Shew me a wretch that has not been acquitted
 By men and devils, both being much the same,
 If he could prove his guilty deeds were fitted
 To advance his church to wealth, or power, or fame,
 Whether for mosque, or triple crown, or mitre,
 Or lama, or plain gown, he played the smiter.

I'll not particularise—'twould be invidious ;
 I'll name no names, Mohammedan, Pagan, Jew,
 Christian, Chinese ; there are no more religious
 On earth but who belong to either crew ;
 But this I say, that there is nought perfidious
 Which some of their most zealous would not do
 For sect or creed's sake—pity in return
 Nor sect nor creed can save from Hell's hot bourn.

Liars and lies deceive mankind and rule them,
 And make them sacrifice the God of Truth
 To bedlam nonsense : reverend men befool them
 With new invented tales, howe'er uncouth ;
 Their cushion-thumpers daily, hourly, school them
 With legends about Dives. Job, and Ruth ;
 And on their brows the cross of Jesus put,
 No matter how they pamper groin or gut.

All are strange animals of wildest change ;
 Beggars grow rich, and spend their wealth to hide
 Their former pauperdom ; mad millions range
 From clime to clime through avarice, fame, or pride ;
 And when they gratify these full, O strange
 And lunatic chuffcats ! to the grave they glide,
 Without one thought of *why* the Almighty sent
 Their souls to earth, and for what purpose lent.

Blind fortune shapes their destinies ; some climb
 To thrones, and find the diadem a jest ;
 Some strut as Popes, and own their joys mere slime ;
 Some roll in riches, and find gold a pest ;
 Some stalk as sages, some run mad in rhyme ;
 But cares corrode them ; solace, sleep, or rest
 They seldom know, until within the arms
 Of Death they lie, secure from further harms.

Yet mark how rabidly they cling to life ;
 More so indeed than any four-legged beast ;
 They loathe death as grave Milton loathed his wife,
 Or as sage Gibbon hated nun and priest :
 Yet what life *is*, but a strange maze of strife,
 In which the wickedest wins the largest feast,
 I know not—but I know how wisely sung
 Mimnermus old; *Whom the Gods love die young.*

The many are ground down to feed the few ;
 The few in splendour lead the life of ease ;
 The many toil from morn till evening's dew,
 To cram the lazy drones with luxuries :
 Millions in rags have scarce a crust to chew,
 Sir Priest, my lord, and king, have what they please :
 If this be not a miniature hell on earth,
 You'll own at least 'tis very tragical mirth.

As to those dreamers and disgusting boobies,
 Who talk Millennium, and think Man will grow
 Better and wiser, I could curse the loobies,
 But will not o'er their maniac spoutings crow ;
 When geese can make from mud fine pearls and rubies,
 I'll then believe in optimism. No—no,

Twill never be ; your race must grovel still,
 Fools, rogues, and slaves, and heirs of every ill.

What Providence designed by your creation
 I'd give a farthing to be told ; the fables
 With which you're ruled are mere equivocation,
 To keep you bound in priests' and despot's cables ;
 And well they work your perfect subjugation .

How are you better off than beasts in stables ?
 Spurred, ridden, whipped to death, to win the plate
 For those who call themselves the " good " and " great."

They fool you with " philosophy," and " patience,"
 " Destiny's will "—the " fate ordained for Man,"
 " Earth is a place of suffering ;" " men and nations
 Must all endure," and " life is but a span ;"
 " The world's a pilgrimage "—such smooth orations
 As these your race of doltish fools trepan ;
 And so I feel no pity for your state,—
 You are yourselves the makers of your fate.

I, in my time, have heard millions of lies,
 But ne'er invented any—'tis forbidden,
 By the Almighty Sovereign of the skies ;
 But this, I know, of all the falsehoods hidden
 In Hell's hot belly, there's not one of size
 Equal to that which long has hobby-ridden
 That Ass, who in God's eyes such wondrous merit has—
 The lie I mean is, *Vincit omnia Veritas*.

For never knew I yet the Truth prevail,
 Though parsons, priests, and sages swear it does :
 When mortals weigh it in their sliding scale,
 'Gainst Falsehood, the beam somehow bends to us :

I wonder not, for Lies bring cakes and ale ;
 While Truth is poorer than an exiled Russ ;
 And so she stands in bleak Siberian cold,
 While Falsehood struts in purple, gems and gold.

Here is the Valley of Destruction, filled
 With images and idols from all climes,
 Where men through folly or imposture build
 A scape-goat for the people's daily crimes ;
 If wood or marble fashioned by the skilled
 Could cleanse away the wickedness that grimes
 The human soul, the wealthy soon would buy
 An easy passage through the needle's eye.

But this is a mistake, and idol-worship,
 Whether ordained by Juggernaut or Rome,
 Saves not the serf, nor washes white his lordship ;
 The things are only wood or painted loam ;
 Whether to saint or santon men pay courtship,
 Is time abused ;—they might have fooled at home
 For anything they gain by homage given
 To the poor creature, and withheld from Heaven.

What makes their madness more absurd is this,
 They deify dead men, and nothing knowing
 Whether they howl in hell or smile in bliss,
 But wildly taking them on their own showing,
 They fall before their feet, and even kiss
 Their corpses, bones, and reliques ; more bestowing
 Upon those rotten lies, of God accurst,
 Than upon Him, the Ancient of the First.

The worshippers of such unhappy sinners,
 Sainted on earth, but fasting here in flame,

Who've paid their money to procure fat dinners
 For the priests who their miracles proclaim,
 On the Last Day will see these wooden grinners
 Rise from this Vale of Fire and loud exclaim,
Behold the Gods you bent to, we are they ;
Puppets or dolls, and like yourselves, poor clay.

Here is Saint Gervas of Milan, whose gown
 Cured a blind butcher, Severus by name ;
 Three saints, who had their lodging in the town,
 Paulinus, Ambrose, Austin known to fame,
 Were present at the feat, and wrote it down,
 And afterwards on oath declared the same ;
 That heretic would be in truth perverse
 Who'd dare such truthful swearers to asperse.

Here is Saint Boniface of Russia, who
 Converted the Grand Duke, who saw him walk
 Unhurt through fire, as if 'twere harmless dew,
 Beaded upon some flower's fragrant stalk ;
 A few days afterwards a murderous crew
 Attacked the Saint, who tried, but failed to balk
 Their fury : he was killed, and is confined
 With us—a thing, he says, that's most unkind.

Here's Guido Cavalcanti, whose whole life
 Was self-devoted to *one* speculation,
 Which he pursued through every kind of strife ;—
 To prove the falsehood of *all* Revelation ;
 And shew that of all lies the one most rife
 With mischief, and most worthy subjugation,
 Was that which says there is a God.—The ass
 Would now give all his writings for a mass.

Here's Andreas Cæsalpinus, who maintained
 That men were formed by chance from putrid mud,
 Warmed by the sunshine ; but how it obtained
 The necessary aid of bone and blood,
 This visionary ape left unexplained ;
 Minos dismissed him here to chew the cud
 Of bitter fancies, and repent the day
 When first from Genesis he went astray.

O Genesis ! O Genesis ! O Genesis !
 How my gorge rises thus to see you flouted ;
 You who excel in most supreme parenthesis,
 Ought never by the people to be doubted ;
 Were I the Pope, what curses and what menaces,
 I'd fling like thunder upon all who snouted,
 Or turned up the nose at your great learning,
 Admitted by all parsons of discerning.

Vanini, like a villain, first decried you,
 For which they roasted him in fair Toulouse ;
 Spinoza next, that odious wretch, denied you,
 For which we should have had him in our noose ;
 Hobbes, Shaftesbury, St. John, Arouet, all belied you,
 Each walking in the other's wicked shoes ;
 I don't know why we've not such rogues in Hell ;
 I don't know why in flames they do not yell.

Yet somehow they've escaped my noble Master,
 And have ascended into higher spheres ;
 Where I pray heaven, the Hebrew's mighty pastor
 (Amosis) flogs them daily into tears :
 If he does so, may God refuse them plaster,
 To heal their gashes and their bloody sears,

For daring to attack that sacred book,
Which is as pure as Jordan's holy brook.

Toland and Woolston held it up to scorn ;
Tom Paine, the tailor, said it was a hoax ;
I wonder why such varlets e'er were born,
I wonder why God struck not dead such folks.
I look beyond our time, and see a sworn
Right reverend bishop, try the mob to coax
Into the notion that 'twas false.—Colenso !
How can you scandalize all goodly men so ?

I hope to heaven that Cantia's Archbishop,
Will put you into court for thus blaspheming ;
I hope to God that Lushington will dish up
Your wicked self, and carve you for your scheming :
I hope in fine—although I would not pish up
Your lordship wholly, for such nonsense screaming,
They'll make you openly recant, and own
That Genesis came straight from God alone.

Here's King Alphonso of Castile, who swore
The world would have been better had he been
Consulted on the point an hour before
'Twas made, and flung into the vast serene ;
His majesty has leisure to deplore
His blasphemy, and curse the crowd obscene
Of piggish courtiers who indulged his humour,
And puffed him, like the frog, into a tumour.

Here's Clement, whom wise Trajan erst commanded,
To be flung headlong i' the Euxine Sea,
Because from pagan rites the saint disbanded

A multitude, and Christians made them be.
 The waters drowned him, but the Pope demanded
 From God a miracle, which all might see ;
 So that day twelvemonth the big waves retired
 Some leagues away from where the Saint expired,

Leaving the bottom of the ocean bare

Where perished sweet Saint Clement, for three miles ;
 That all who wished to offer up a prayer
 Might do so safe from Satan and his wiles ;
 A stately temple was erected there,
 By angels, doubtless, and seraphic toils,
 Which temple was uncovered once a year,
 And there the holy man lay on his bier.

A woman once who entered in the fane,

Forgot her child there when she came away ;
 For twelve long months the roaring Euxine main
 Covered the marble house where Clement lay
 At last the year was ended, and again
 The temple was disclosed on Clement's day ;
 She found the baby not one whit the worse,
 Alive and kicking—hungry, though, of course.

Perillus groans from yonder brazen bull,

That stands surrounded by undying fire ;
 'Tis his own workmanship ; the doltish gull
 Formed it for Phalaris, whose vengeance dire
 With hapless men and women filled it full ;
 He rammed the maker in by way of hire ;
 Deeming it right that rascally inventors
 Should feel, like Guillotin, their own tormentors.

Here is Paterculus, whom Censorinus,
 Tyrant of Sicily, employed to make
 A brazen steed, to which this royal Minos
 Flung those he hated, as he would a cake :
 The horse was formed. *Our gracious thoughts incline us,*
 Quoth he to Pat, whose knees began to quake,
To try you first upon this skittish horse—
 The brazen Monster hurled him down a corse.

Here's Lok, the evil Demon of the North,
 The grand contriver of deceits and frauds,
 Which from his heart perfidious he pours forth,
 Until he stirs up men to fight with gods ;
 Prime architect of guilt, he blights all worth,
 Turning the sun-born souls of men to clods,
 And ever plotting blasphemies against
 The heaven, since first his hellish birth commenced.

His monster offspring howl around his cave,
 Fenrir the Wolf, the Serpent of Midgard,
 And Hela, chained in flame, at which they rave,
 And doubtless think their bondage very hard ;
 The Day of Judgment from this living grave
 Shall disentomb them, when, so sings the bard
 Of Scandinavia, Fenrir will gulp down
 The sun, regardless of that planet's frown.

Goethe.

What forms are these, one-eyed, hoar-tusked, and fierce,
 Their hairs entwined with snakes, their hands with
 brass,
 Yellow-winged, serpent-scaled, with eyes that pierce,
 And breathe an icy coldness as they pass ?

Mephistopheles.

You'd hardly wish to play at carte and tierce
 With Nymphs like these, unless you were an ass,
 And destitute of all the mental organs.—
 Hats off, Sir Minstrel, and salute the Gorgons.

Stheno, Euryalè, Medusa—sisters,
 Daughters of Phorcys, very lovely ladies,
 Who teach sour misses all's not gold that glisters,
 But torture them when they descend to Hades.
 Perseus, whose weapons sharper were than clysters,
 Sent the three hither ; each of them a maid is,—
 At least I've never heard of man or boy
 Who wished their charms bewitching to enjoy.

See, from their horrid mouths drop goutts of blood,
 Which change to fiery serpents as they fall,
 And float for ever through the flaming flood,
 Of surging, screaming Spectres, stinging all—
 Yon Pit alone, o'er which we lately stood,
 Contains its thousand millions, steeped in gall,
 Of sinners thus tormented—each one trying
 To thrust his neighbour to these serpents flying.

Medusa's serpent-cinctured head, which once,
 While she was breathing the bright upper air,
 Turned into marble cold each gazing dunce,
 Acts differently now on fools who stare
 Upon its horrors ; body, limbs, and sconce,
 Exposed one instant to its ghastly glare,
 Are metamorphsed into fire ;—so turn
 Your eyes another way, or *you* may burn.

Cold, icy-hearted villains, like King Charles,
 Who laughed while men like Samuel Butler starved.
 Or Horace Walpole, that mere mass of snarls,
 Or Byron's wife, that frigid humbug, carved
 Of steel or mathematics ; souls like knarles
 In toughest oak ; in hell unrobed, unlarved,
 Are subjected to fires by Miss Medusa,
 Hotter than those that scorched and killed Creusa.

Behold the Cannibal Birds, surnamed Stymphalides,
 With human faces dripping o'er with blood,—
 Your limbs are trembling, and your aspect pallid is,
 As if you feared these guardians of the flood ;
 Fear not—while here you shall escape all maladies ;
 You're quite secure while joined with me you scud
 Along the air, from every kind of vermin,
 Harpies, Snakes, Seirens, Bears, Bulls, Hydras, Mermen.

In their huge claws they carry, as you see,
 Rough red-hot millstones of gigantic weight,
 With which the miscreants in the pit they ree :
 Smashing, to atoms every broiling pate ;
 Drunkard, deceiver, usurer, debauchee,
 Glutton, and rogúe, who form the Locust's freight,
 They pelt and plunge down several fathoms deep,
 To form a very nasty kind of heap.

Here are the Anakim, those lawless brutes
 Of Palestine, to whom the stateliest Jews
 Were but as grasshoppers ; they stand like mutes
 Under the Tree of Hell, whose poisonous dews

Distilled from Styx, and sucked up through the roots,
 Rain on them with the piercing power of screws ;
 Transfixing each from scalp to heel with pains,
 While fiery insects burrow in their brains.

Baal-Zephon, a dog-headed Devil, guards them,
 And tends the Tree—Al-Zakkûm is its name—
 Thus for their brutish tastes our Judge rewards them,
 A punishment which nobody can blame ;
 The foulest fiends we have, when God discards them,
 Are forced to own, with burning tears of shame,
 That they deserve their fate, nor dare inveigh
 'Gainst the decree, but tremble and obey.

Here's Lulli, the composer, who, when dying,
 Sent for a priest to hear his last confession ;
 Sir-reverence came, but doggedly denying
 Full absolution for some sad transgression,
 Until he burned an opera, then lying
 Upon his bed, containing some expression
 Uncatholic, the sly deceitful puppy
 Feigned to consent, but had another copy,

Which when his fever left him, he brought out
 Upon the stage, much to the priest's dismay,
 Who thought his penitent had died devout,
 Repenting much that anti-papal play ;
 In a few years or so it came about
 That Lulli really died and came this way,
 For the tricked priests refused his boots to grease
 With holy oil for rogueries like these.

Here is the emperor Valentinian bound

With his prime ministers, two monstrous Bears,
Kept for his pleasure in his palace ground,

By which, he said, he managed his affairs ;
He thanked his god such easy ways he found,
To free his mind from all oppressive cares ;
Whenever he grew dull he threw some men
To the Bears, and felt his spirits come again.

Goethe.

What horrible Monster sweeps down yonder Vale,
Half bull, half man, with horns of brass and fire
And nostrils breathing flame, and eyes that swale
And splutter lightnings ; madness, might, and ire
Clothe his huge neck ; a Rider fierce and pale,
And frenzy-stricken, reins him, while a dire
And loathsome naked Woman with red hair
Is tossed from horn to horn, and looks despair ?

Mephistopheles.

That noble brute, sweet bard, is Minotaurus
A favourite animal of our czar ; the fool
Who rides him, much against his will, is Scaurus,
Whom king Tiberius sent to us to school ;
The woman, rather say the ichthyosaurus
In female shape, that moves your ridicule,
Is Queen Elizabeth Tudor, a snake-fish,
As cold and bad as any in our dish.

Cruelty, lewdness, hate, pride, envy, meanness,
Treachery, intrigue, have sent the lady here,

Tied to the ancient prodigy of uncleanness,
 Who hoists her like a skilful engineer ;
 The Ghost behind, whose devilish obsceneness
 Shocked even Rome, pricks on the human steer,
 To toss his burden still from horn to horn,
 That curses the black hour that saw her born.

And so the Three are borne from hell to hell
 Unceasingly, unrestingly for ever ;
 Swift as a cannon-ball, or fiery shell
 That wings along through startled air, wherever
 The shock impels it ; right and left, pell mell,
 They drive, and make the affrighted Shades assever
 That bad as their own torturers have been,
 Far worse attend her majesty the quean.

See here the Cainites, who thought Cain alone
 Worthy of worship, as a stalwart slayer ;
 Rejecting Truth as by Osarsiph shewn
 Whom they regarded as a merciless swayer ;
 Judas they worshipped, and that horrid crone
 Jezebel, and poor Sampson's false betrayer ;
 And said that Cain did well to slay his brother,
 But had done better had he killed his mother,

And put an end at once to all the race
 Of mortals on this earth, a consummation
 Devoutly to be wished. A crew so base
 As these, of course, had no chance of salvation :
 We keep them here impaled in fire, and place
 The Abelites beside them, whose damnation
 Springs from a tenet that their souls now blisters,
 That brothers should be wedded to their sisters.

Abel, they say, was the first martyr, he
Married his sister, *ergo*, he did right ;
And all who don't, commit flat burglary,
And richly merit Hell's infernal bite ;
To argue with such frenzied fools would be
As wise as to the moon to take a flight,
To search for silver in her cindery sphere—
We don't—we merely roast the dunces here.

In yonder pit of flame lies Charles Martèl,
Who robbed the monks of many a rich abbaye ;
Scorning the Pope, who swore with book and bell,
And sharing with his troops the unhallowed prey :
These men of God have cursed him into Hell,
And here he roasts, and shall for many a day :
Till stolen brick and mortar, rood and perch,
Are all restored to holy Mother Church.

To saintly Bishop Eucher was revealed
The wretched state of this redoubted knave ;
And when the miscreant's tomb was once unsealed,
No corpse was found within the empty grave :
But this was seen by all around who kneeled :—
A fiery Serpent issued from the cave
Where lay his coffin, and a sulphurous smell
Proved that the dead man's soul was not quite well.

Here is a Coliseum, grand indeed,
Massive and vast, to which Rome's Capitol
Is like a baby's toy, or as a weed
Is to a wilderness of oaks ; the wall

Lifts its proud front to Heaven that dares impede
 Its further progress upward ; tower and hall,
 And portico, and colonnade, and dome
 Shine, as if Gods had built it for their home.

Briareus, hundred-headed, stands and guards
 This fiery pathway : in his hands he wields
 A hundred burning swords, described by bards
 Who've roamed in spirit through our happy fields ;
 Otus, in height some twenty thousand yards,
 Stands fronting him, and like a tempest, shields
 From all approach of Angels mercy-sent,
 The trembling wretches in this fortress pent.

Let's peep inside ;—by Plutus ! it is filled
 With millions nailed to steel chairs white with heat ;
 The place with solemn silence hushed and stilled,
 They sit like corpses each within its sheet :
 Voices they have not : thus their Torturer willed ;
 So they can neither shout, nor groan, nor bleat ;
 But cling immoveably consumed with flame,
 The women doubtless swelling big with shame.

These are the odious race of scandal-bearers,
 Who thus are plagued for all their lies on earth ;
 Mixed with them also may be seen false swearers,
 Who are akin to slanderers by birth ;
 Nothing delights us more than to see snarers
 Of truth thus seated on Abaddon's hearth,
 Where they must roast for several thousand years,
 Till their foul souls are washed snow white with tears.

Giant Ægèon near this corner stands,
 Clothed in the thunder of the King of Hell,
 And scattering lightnings from his hundred hands,
 On those who seek to burst their citadel ;
 Black as thick night with look that awe commands,
 The fellow acts his part of sentry well ;
 And inaccessible to filthy bribes,
 Guards zealously these nice Hell-toasted tribes.

Behold yon Void—a vast and horrible Chaos ;
 Sulphurous smoke, stench, flame, and pitchy blackness,
 Vultures more fierce than those on wild Imäus,
 Imps who ne'er let the fires subside to slackness,
 But stir them up as old Ennosigæus
 Stirs the broad earth, when fierce demoniacness
 Preys on his liver, and this King of Shakers
 Produces earthquakes, frightening sober quakers.

The Calydonian Boar which angry Dian
 Let loose, as God unfolds the monsoon's wing,
 Roams through that mighty chasm ; Nemæa's lion
 Bore not such tusks or claws of mortal sting,—
 The triple-headed Ogre, black Geryon,
 Rides the 'stern beast ; fit pastime for the king
 Who fed his flocks on human flesh, and now
 Urges the Boar through yonder bloody Slough.

See yon colossal Wheel, a world of fire
 Revolving ever ; it was once Ixion's,
 Who burned his father-in-law alive ; the Sire
 Of Pagan myths, with an august defiance
 Of what was due to justice, as a hire
 For what he did, placed him among the scions

Of his Olympus, where the murderer passed
A very pleasant period, till at last

He fell in love with Juno, Jove's own spouse ;

The god incredulous dressed up a Cloud ;

Ixion longing to adorn the brows

Of his fat friend, and not a little proud

To see the haughty Queen sans shift or blouse,

Present herself before him, while he vowed

Ten thousand oaths of love, was taken napping

By Jove, who knew a trick or two of trapping.

Fired with revenge, he hurled him down to Hell,

And tied him up to yonder Wheel of Snakes,

Where for more years than I have time to tell,

The knave was twisted into pains and aches :

At last, when Jove himself to Orchus fell,

And went the way of all the Pagan rakes,

Ixion was released, and Judas, who

Sold Christ, succeeded him—behold the Jew !

With foxlike head, small eyes, and visage spare,

An aspect like the weasel's or an ape's,

The yellow traitor writhes ; a savage glare

Of ravenous avarice in his face, that gapes

For gold amid the fiery, stifling air

Of Hell itself ; and see—the sparks he scrapes

With his long fingers, thinking them red gold ;

And yells to find 'tis flame that they enfold.

Goethe.

Judas ! good heavens—why sure it can't be he,

Whom late divines have proved to be a saint ?

Did he not sell the Incarnate Deity,
 To free him from the modest, mild restraint,
 In which he wrapped Omnipotence? I see
 How much they erred, who thus presumed to paint
 The traitor, swearing hard the slave abhorred,
 Did it but to make manifest the Lord.

Visions of glory, loftiest aspirations,
 Tempted him to the deed, not thirst of gold ;
 The grandeur of Messias, and his nation's
 Sway o'er the earth, as had been long foretold,
 The legioned angels, bright as constellations,
 The truth fulfilled, he panted to behold ;—
 And when he saw the blighted, blasted hope
 Sublime that filled him, used the friendly rope.

Hence they say Judas was a proper man,
 And almost venture to make out he's saved,
 As but for him had failed the heavenly plan,
 Whereby the Word made Flesh blessed man enslaved :
 To see him then on yonder caravan
 Of rolling flame, persuades me that they raved,
 As theologues most usually do,
 When speculating about False and True.

Another friend of Jupiter's—his brat
 By Madam Plota, Tantalus I mean—
 Was once the tenant of this verdant plat
 Of moss, where much he suffered from the spleen,
 Because he stole his father's favourite cat,
 And looked on Ganymede with glance obscene,

And was a very saucy, blackguard fellow,
Whose petulant tongue seemed only made to bellow.

Admitted to the banquets of the gods,

He scorned all decency and shocked all eyes,
Spite of his father's friendly winks and nods,

He spewed forth oceans of such beastly lies,
As would disgust the dullest country clods ;

No wonder that they served him in this guise,
And sent him here to thirst and hunger doomed,
'Mid food and drink that could not be consumed.

Trees loaded with the most delicious fruit,

Nectar, ambrosia, grape, and purple peach,
Waters that murmured like the Orphean lute,

And clear as crystal gushed within his reach ;
But ever and anon a hellish hoot

Of laughter scared him, as he grasped at each ;
And food and water vanished from his lip,
While he fell howling 'neath Alecto's whip.

At other times he saw a monstrous rock

Suspended o'er his head, and almost falling,
A sight that gave the wretch so dire a shock

That Hell's extremes re-echoed with his squalling ;
But yet it fell not—'twas the Fiend's arch mock

Placed it there, for he loved to see him sprawling
Low like a beast and striving to escape
The weight terrific toppling o'er his nape.

After long years of torment, respite came

At last, and he was suffered to go free :

I know not what blest company can claim

His presence now, or what is their degree :
He was succeeded in his seat of shame

By one of Satan's sons—the wretch you see,
King James the First of England, note him well,
A fouler miscreant breathes not now in Hell.

He strives, you see, to dip his burning tongue
Into the cooling wave, but as he bends
The jagged rock that o'er his shoulders hung
Down on his head with crushing weight descends.
Now he puts forth his scraggy hands among
The tempting fruit that sweetest odour sends ;
But a grim Fury hales it from his gaze,
Or hands him poison in a bloody vase.

He drinks, he drinks, his entrails are on fire,
The murderer drains the poison that he mixed ;
His eyeballs glare with more than fiendish ire,
His inmost life with madness is transfixed ;
His bursting pores envenomed sweat perspire ;—
This beast is like a fool that falls betwixt
Two stools ; for whether agonised by thirst
Or quenching it, he is completely cursed.

Here roasts Earl Nelson : parson first, then peer ;
Who swindled Lady Hamilton : here shrieks
A crabbed wretch, as sour as stale small beer,
Made acid in the sun for several weeks,
Gifford the critic, famed for many a jeer
Against the right and true : his carcass reeks
Unpleasantly from yonder pit of thorns,
In which he voids his horrid mass of scorns.

Hearken! and hear him cry aloud, while shines
 Before his tortured eyes a Phantom fair,
 Shining like diamonds from orient mines,
 And wafted softly through purpureal air ;
 This bright edidlon, in whose light he pines
 And writhes in madness, envy, hate, despair,
 Is Shelley ;—whom this very dirty varlet
 Abused through life, for which he now burns scarlet.

Gifford.

A voice like flowers and music sweetly blended,
 A fragile form, but beauteous as Apollo's,
 A soul of light by the three Graces tended,
 Eyes like young Dian's when the deer she follows
 Over the emerald lawns and sylvan hollows ;
 Such wert thou, Shelley, minstrel heaven-descended !
 O incarnation of ethereal Truth,
 O sun of Beauty darkened in thy youth
 By the foul mists of slander-loving men,
 By the base exhalations from that fen
 Of venom called man's heart—we lost thy light :
 Spheres far removed enjoy thy beauty bright :
 So do we ever with our things of price ;
 We help the Devil to kill the flowers of Paradise.

Goethe.

This does not sound like slander or abuse !

Mephistopheles.

No—creatures of this class who lie for gold,
 And all that's bright and beautiful traduce
 On earth, when they are penned in Satan's fold
 Are by the Demons (like wild dogs let loose

Upon their hideous carcasses) controlled,
 And forced in lieu of their vile earthly scandals,
 To preach the truth to all our Goths and Vandals.

Dishonest writers who all truth belied,
 We force, but with some trouble, to recant ;
 Dishonest priests whose hearts were stuff with pride
 We trounce, until they sweetly meekness chant.
 All, who, God's shining talents, given to guide
 Mankind to excellence and truth, transplant
 Into their own small selfish grounds, and use
 For Hell not Heaven, we deep in fire suffuse.

Look hear, and hearken ! Horace Walpole hisses
 From yonder chasm of vipers, while a face
 Pale, swoln, and sad ; above the dark abyss is,
 Lighted by Pöesy's bewitching grace ;
 'Tis Chatterton's frail image ; brightest blisses
 Crown his proud spirit in Elysium's place ;
 But the small mannikin who drove him mad,
 Is forced in hell to own his conduct bad.

Horace Walpole.

Like the young Moon, when down from heaven she came
 To court the slumbering shepherd as he lay
 Nooked in a dell amid the Latmian hills,
 Filling the spot with an ambrosial flame
 Of light ethereal from her silver ray :—
 So to the soul comes Genius from the skies,
 And such immortal splendours there instils
 As charm the young, and glad the old and wise.
 O Venus-souled, bright Dreamer, Minstrel, Child
 Of heaven, whose dreams of light and olden lore

Shine like clear stars along the enchanted page :
 Forgive the meanness that upon thy wild
 Proud spirit burned, like Nessus' shirt of gore,
 And tortured thee to death. In flames that rage
 Ever and ever still around me, thou
 Art well avenged—avert thy sad, accusing brow !

Mephistopheles.

The Larvæ, those grim ghosts or apparitions
 Which come from graves at night in flowing sheets,
 And brimstone eyes, and horns ; and raise seditions
 In people's bowels, till they make retreats
 Far off from these accursèd inanitions.—

Those creatures dwell in yonder misty streets,
 Where they hang out their grinning masks all day,
 To frighten curious travellers away.

Goethe.

For several hours, or days, or years, or ages,
 I know not which—how long have we been here ?
 I've looked through all your prisons, cells, and cages,
 For Byron's spirit—where's that noble peer ?

Mephistopheles.

Vain your enquiry—vainer, too, your rage is,
 If rage it is, because that Bard got clear ;
 But certainly we have him not among us ;
 Though we have plenty of his foes, who throng us.

Byron was so tormented in his days
 By rogues like Southey, knaves like Milman, sneaks
 Like Hunt, and sundry other popinjays
 Whose names bring blood and wrath into my cheeks,

That when Death wrapped in night his splendid rays,

Like the sun hid by Chimborazo's peaks,
The Judge considered he had had enough
On earth, a spirit bright as his to huff.

And so he sent him to the Elysian Fields,

The old poetic heaven, where he dwells,
And sings along its green and beauteous wealds,
Or muses by its sweet sequestered wells ;
'Twas thought (for this, to some, true pleasure yields,)

He'd now and then inspect our blazing Hells,
And see his foes in flame, but though he might
Have come, he never did, their souls to spite.

And in that flower-land, where you'll never get,

With Byron dwell the splendid shining race
Of bards, within whose souls the stars were set,
Of sages in whose minds the gods had place ;
Gladly you'd crow, if you, my pretty pet,
Could but ascend, and join them ; in which case
I own you'd have the laugh against me, but
To do so, you have gone the wrong short-cut.

However I can give you as I vowed

Almost as good a berth—nay, some say better ;
The moment you to me the knee have bowed,
I'll post you off as quickly as a letter,
And send you straight into a merry crowd
Of zoneless beauties, whom no scruples fetter ;
You still refuse—well, well, I never knew
A gentleman so hard to please as you.

Here is Saint Mocho, a great Irish saint,

Who wafted Saint Kyenanus and a score

Black-mantled monks, without a single taint
 Of sin, from Dublin's bare and rocky shore
 To England, which had raised a touching plaint
 For such a cargo ; the long cloak he wore
 Was all the boat the holy hermit needed ;
 Which new invention wondrously succeeded.

Packed in his cowl they went to sea like men,
 Secure from every risk of being drowned ;
 Our imps went forth from Satan's hellish den,
 By arts unnumbered hoping to confound
 The wild attempt ; no devil's tongue or pen
 Their failure can describe ; for safe and sound
 As roaches, the black guards of Peter landed
 Somewhere near Dover, whence they soon disbanded,

And spread the news miraculous, which, ran
 Like wildfire through the wondering island, whence
 Much to the Pope's delight and gain began
 A fluent stream to Rome of Peter's pence ;
You know that with the sapient race of man,
 There's one thing most uncommon, common sense ;
 And this fine legend proved it. But poor Mocho
 Somehow at last got settled *in hoc loco*.

Yonder's Saint Como, whom the Papists worship
 In the same way as ladies in old Rome,
 Adored the good Priapus, of whose curship
 You had some curious pictured books at home.
 Girt round by great gorillas, see his lordship,
 Monboddo hight, who wrote a splendid tome,
 To prove that men were ourans without tails,
 Which sent its author to these pleasant dales.

That perpendicular Mountain, where you see
A headless man labouring with all his might,
Of muscular arm, bent back, and sinewy knee,
To roll a bleeding skull to the rough height ;
The dreadful load still struggling to get free,
Draws blood in torrents from the groaning wight ;—
Was once reserved for Sisyphus, a knave
Who toiled there long, till Christ the thief forgave,

And stuck Charles Stuart of England in his place,
Whom lying priestcraft dubbed a sacred martyr,
Though rogue more false, blood-thirsting, stern or base,
Lived not among even those who've worn the garter ;
Cromwell, the hero who bore off the mace,
Taught him what Walpole called the Greater Charter :
Whipped him, and sent him cranium-less to bed,
For which the English sup still on calf's head.

The millstone which old Sisyphus was wont
To turn, was given as a forget-me-not ;
The cunning Jesuit stomached the affront,
And humbly offered thanks for what he got ;
The headless Stuart, who looked like a runt
Without his topknot, blessed his lucky lot,
Thinking that there was nought for him to roll,
And feeling rather pleasant on the whole.

But here his majesty was much mistaken,
In place of stone, they gave him his own skull,
Filled with the souls of Wentworth, Laud, and Bacon,
Which served as ballast for the crazy hull
Of sacred bone ; since then such knocks have shaken
The four, I swear to ye, by the Grand Mogul,

That neither brains nor souls are worth a sou—
Fit destiny for the false-hearted crew.

Toiling and moiling still with might and main,
The headless Corpse still strives to reach the summit;
Rolling before it, with a world of pain,
The skull more weighty than the weightiest plummet ;
Rock, fosse, steep, ridge, and gorge, his path restrain,—
They're passed—one trench yawns still—can he o'er-
come it ?
He mounts—he fails—the skull slips, rolls, and falls
Down to the base—the Caitiff headlong sprawls.

Goethe.

But is Lord Bacon doomed to this for ever ?
His soul of light, methinks, might have been saved.

Mephistopheles.

I do not take upon me to assever
His spirit fills that cranium depraved :
Whether he has escaped it, or will never
Leave that small prison where he was enslaved,
I do not know ; but this I can assert,
Hell would not be too hot for his desert.

A vile, mean, crawling sycophant, who bent,
As if to God, before the filthiest thing
That ever Satan in his mockery sent
To earth, debasement o'er men's minds to bring :
Had he not well atoned for time mispent
In worshipping that foul polluted king,

By teaching millions doctrines fraught with truth,
I don't see how he could have hoped for ruth.

But since Christ pardoned the repentant robber,
And since men's sins by masses are wiped off,
And since the Church became a giant jobber,
The worst may hope to 'scape our fiery trough :
If Bacon gets to Heaven, despite the slobber
With which he lauded James, the Devils may scoff
At Heaven itself for rescuing such a knave
From this hot place, which good intentions pave.

Phæa, the savage Sow, which long infested
The lands of Cromion, slaughtering, like a Turk
Or Tartar, all who crossed her path detested,
Is here at last after life's fitful work ;
Her iron bowels millions have digested
Of holy hypocrites, whom, like fat pork,
She smashes underneath her brazen tusks,
As hungry ploughmen grind delicious rusks.

Her rider, as you guess, is Harry Tudor,
Who wages war with popes, priests, nuns, and monks,
Than whom a beastlier, falsier, grosser, lewder,
Battalion breathed not in your world ; pimps, punks,
Bawds, procuresses, catamites (*proh pudor !*)
And poisoners, swell their tribes, whom our old hunks,
Having a very eagle eye for such,
Selects, and throws into his good Beast's clutch.

In his fat hand he holds the rod that Moses
Wielded in land of Egypt, which discovers
The game he hunts ; a single touch discloses
The secret vices of those sacred lovers :

However fraud conceals, or force opposes,
 Avails them nought; he knocks them down like plovers
 Fattening his furious Sow, and laughter-shaking
 His swollen paunch till every limb is aching.

This kingly butcher had been damned indeed,
 With Nero and the rest, in fire eternal,
 But that his hunting of the piggish breed
 Won favour for him with The Powers supernal;
 And as he little cared for church or creed,
 And spurned the scarlet woman's kiss maternal,
 Preferring mine—they backed him to this Sow,
 To do the work we see him doing now.

Here in this desert is the Plague of Toads,
 Infesting those whom Satan roasts in chains,
 False preachers, flatterers; whose foul abodes,
 Are filthy sewers, marshes, fens, and drains;
 You poets, who for pelf write birth-day Odes,
 And turn and wheel for money like light vanes,
 Vending the god within you for a mess
 Of pottage, seek this hideous wilderness.

Yonder's the Hebrew false Messias, Hakim,
 Who swore he was King David's proper seed;
 But when the Saracens pursued to take him,
 And that he saw the game was up indeed;
 Fearing, if found, his enemies might stake him,
 But that, if lost, the followers of his creed
 Might very safely him The Saviour dub,
 He jumped into an aqua-fortis tub,

Hoping no trace of him would thus remain,
 But that they'd think alive to God he went ;
 The circumcised impostor's hope was vain,
 His fat and hair, though in the poison pent,
 Were proof against its fierce consuming bane ;
 So Fate opposed his blasphemous intent :
 And as he liked an aqua-fortis bath
We gave him one, which still the fellow hath.

And see—another Jew, one Zedechias,
 Who charmed the court of Louis Debonnaire,
 Proving himself the only true Messiah,
 By miracles that made the people stare ;
 Winning them from their ancient Christian bias,
 Which left them, when they saw him then and there
 Swallow down cartloads full of hay, and then
 The cart themselves, the horses, and the men.

All looked amazed ; the artful Jew began
 To think his fortune made, and proudly strutted ;
 He almost scorned the name of Son of Man,
 And with repeated cartloads he so glutted
 His gorge capacious, that the rabble ran
 In millions after him ; the juggler gutted
 Their pockets of their pence, and then made off—
 Leaving the swindled Frenchmen Europe's scoff.

Satan, who has a friendship for the Gauls,
 Avenged them on the cheat, and placed him here ;
 Where loud to Father Abraham he calls,
 While all the papists round him scoff and sneer ;
 This new Messiah heeds them not, but drawls
 In guttural Hebrew still from year to year,

Hoping the patriarch will take compassion,
And pull him out of hell in Hercules' fashion.

Here's John de Meun, who wrote the famed *Romance
Of Roses* : on his death bed he desired
To be interred in the best church in France,
Bequeathing it his trunk ; with avarice fired
The monks complied, but ready were to dance
With rage when, searching for the gold acquired,
They found the poet's trunk filled up with stones—
The holy men dug up the wicked bones.

But when the Parliament of Paris heard
The minstrel's arch device, they laughed and made
The priests replace the body disinterred,
Who did so, grumbling sore at being betrayed :
The saintly abbot to the last averred
That for this cheat the bard would be conveyed
To Hell's hot flames, to burn for ever there ;
And so he was, which ended the affair.

Goethe.

But sure 'twere hard to damn him for this jest ;
And roast him ever on undying coals.

Menphistopheles.

Why so it would be, but I thought you guessed
That of the millions of hell-tortured souls
Whom you have seen so snugly in our nest,
The greater part are merely paying tolls ;
I mean enduring purgatorial pains
With us, ere they are shipped to heavenly plains.

There's no such place, though papists swear there is,
 As Purgatory : those who die in sin
 Are sent here by the Judge : we follow His
 Commands, and roast them, though they groan and grin;
 When they are cleansed they fly off with a whiz,
 And to some Land of Beauty enter in :
 The most abandoned vagabonds you've seen
 In these dominions, may at length grow clean.

'Tis even hoped the Devils themselves in time
 Will be forgiven, and admitted back
 Unto the glories of that Heavenly Clime
 Whose Gods they were so vain as to attack :
 But this fine notion's doubtful, though sublime :
 For *my* part I abhor this scene of wrack,
 And would have no objection to remount
 That Golden Ocean whence I drew my fount.

Here are the three unhappy Jews whom Moses
 Cursed and sent down alive into our pit,
 Korah, Abiram, Dathan ; Hell incloses
 No louder bawlers, or for fire more fit ;
 One of the Rabbis most profanely proses
 Alluding to their fate, nor fears to twit
 The Hebrew Prophet with a vile design,
 Saying the thing was managed by a mine.

When the earth oped they sank first to their knees,
 Thence to the waist, and thence unto the chin,
 At each they called as loud as they could wheeze,
Have mercy on us, Moses, for our sin !
 The Prophet bade the earth relentless squeeze
 The writhing rebels, till it sucked them in ;

Whence doctors say that Moses was reproved
By the Lord Gods, who were with anger moved.

*They called to thee for mercy thrice, and thou
Would'st not attend unto their penitent speech ;
Had they to God directed once their vow,
God would have heard and have forgiven each.*

This fable, if it be one, shews men how

They should address their thoughts, and whom beseech
For God will pity, when unsparing man
Smites without mercy all beneath his ban.

Mercy's indeed a virtue very proper,

But somehow man to man but seldom shows it :
They prate of it, I own, but put a stopper
Upon its flowings, and say justice froze it ;
They seal it over as with seals of copper,
And very handsomely within enclose it ;
And then they ask forgiveness from the Lord—
While round their brothers' necks they strain a cord.

Those whom *we* ne'er forgive are unjust Judges,

Like Jeffreys, Toler, Parker, Law, and Scroggs ;
Puppets who act on earth as Satan's drudges,
And are his most obedient humble dogs ;
Who wreak, in form of law and justice, grudges,
Envies, and hates, when bid to't by King Logs,
Or King Log's basest lacqueys, called prime ministers,
Whose friendship is a prize that always sinister 's.

Their features once demure, grow black and direful,
And void of life, like those of corpses ; some

Pimpled and ulcered, whose expression ireful
Would fright the boldest knight in Christendom ;
Some have no face at all ; see yonder pyre full
Of howling dikasts, a large hecatomb,
Who've neither form nor shape,—a tortured heap
Of bone and hair and worms that never sleep.

Here's Page, who sentenced Savage to be hanged,
Having first begged the jury to convict him ;
A custom not uncommon with your fanged
And scarlet-coloured beast : Sam Johnson licked him
In prose so fearfully, and Savage banged
The wretch in rhyme so well, Judge Minos kicked him
Without a word of further scorn, to those
Who love to lead a jury by the nose.

Here's John Lord Campbell, the most sneaking Scot
That ever lived, since Earth bred slaves and sneaks ;
See, in his rat-like yellow eyes, blood-shot,
And in his adder-brown and leathern cheeks,
And in his mouth, that, like the poisoned pot
Of Macbeth's witches, only falsehood speaks,
A vivid picture of Iscariot old
When he, for thirty shillings, Jesus sold.

The wretch seems agonized with horrid fear,
As if he had some mighty treasure lost ;
What treasure, think you, 'tis he prized so dear ?—
His coronet—which in a cesspool tost
Has sunk some twenty thousand fathoms clear,
Through the most odious filth ;—and so his ghost
Is now condemned to dive for ever after
The coveted thing, while Devils shake with laughter.

By filth, by falsehood, dirty low-intrigue,
 Bowing to this base wretch, and bent to that,
 By cunning fraud, as if he were in league
 With Satan's self, his brows with this to hat,
 He worked and worked, regardless of fatigue,
 With tooth and nail, like undermining rat,
 Until he gained his coronet, and wore
 The thing for which he made his soul, a whore.

So, when he came to Hell, our sneering lord
 And master Satan, who delights to mock,
 Discrowned the shivering wretch, whose soul abhorred,
 Was all one leprous, festering, running pock ;
Well done my faithful servant ! thy reward
Shall be appropriate :—so he ordered Jock
 To dive through loathsome filth for aye descending,
 Deeper in dirt, to nastiness unending.

How oft I've seen him on the bench pollute
 The sacred name of Justice, while he lied ;
 How oft I've marked the grin that spoke the brute,
 When in his words some wretched felon died.
 How oft I've heard him with a scritch-owl's hoot
 The holiest laws of God and Man deride ;
 While he professed to follow them in all,
 In tones like nothing but a reptile's crawl.

But here he is, and here's his final seat ;—
 His felon frauds, his lies, his two-faced arts,
 The wretched plots with which he loved to cheat :
 The avarice shrined within his heart of hearts :
 The selfishness that was his daily meat ;
 His scorn of God, have done their destined parts,

And changed him from a man into a fiend
As false and fetid as Hell ever yeaned.

Yonder the Seven Deadly Sins are dancing
Along the fires of brimstone ; first comes Pride,
With stony brow and lip, and eye up-glancing,
As if with God alone 'twere fit to bide ;
Next follows Anger, furiously advancing,
Roaring aloud as roars the raging tide,
And brandishing a sword red-hot with flame,
While she blasphemes The Father's sacred name.

Next after her comes Envy, whom we've seen
Already ; spectral, yellow, froglike, foul ;
With look askance, and ribs with hunger lean ;
Feeding on death, like some accursèd Ghoul ;
And Covetousness, black and base in mien,
Hiding uncounted wealth within her cowl ;
And Sloth, in swinish shape and waddling gait,
With Gluttony, her greedy, drunken mate.

And last comes Lust—with apeline eyes and grin,
Grimacing odiously, and nude withal ;
Exulting in the loud and loathsome din
That rises from the throats of each and all ;
After them follow all their forms of sin,
Crawling and leprous, slimy, smeared with gall,
Black, wormlike, venomèd, putrid, breathing stench,
A sight that makes their father Satan, blench.

Here are about ten million rotten Forms
Of men and women, lying as in swoon ;
I touch them—lo ! like jack-in-a-box, the swarms
Of reptiles that rise up, and hiss and croon

From out their hearts, where hiding deep like worms,
 These odious, crawling, writhing things commune ;—
 Each reptile is that Vice embodied, which
 These mortals loved, ere flung into our ditch.

Behold the Stag of golden horns, and feet
 Of triple brass, which Hercules ensnared ;
 Tied to his haunches mighty, strong, and fleet
 As the bright sun, he draws a pale, fair-haired,
 And royal woman, in whose smilings sweet
 Are adders fanged ; the demon host shrink scared
 As her appalling screams fill Hell's Abyss—
 I think this female acted much amiss.

Her name was Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots,
 False as the lynx, though lovely as the May ;
 But beauty covered o'er with leprous spots
 Of vice, should never justice lead astray ;
 Her life was one career of odious plots,
 For papal purpose, paramours, and sway :
 But Bess of England had no love for jests,
 And sympathized not with her cousin's guests.

Five hundred years must pass ere from our hands
 The pretty cruel Siren can be freed ;
 She suffers Purgatory in these lands
 For taking share in Bothwell's bloody deed ;
 Had she enjoyed existence till the sands
 Of life ran out their natural course, her meed
 Would have been doubled here, but Bess's axe
 Smote off five hundred from her proper tax.

Nor would the thousand years have been too much ;—
 A common person might get off with less ;

But favoured folks, whom Fate exalts to such
 High dignity, should pause ere they transgress ;
 Vice is contagious, and the royal touch
 Transmits it on to millions who profess
 Such loyal love for all that's done at court,
 What erst was crime grows fashionable sport.

After her stalks the Erymanthian Sow
 Bestriden by Goliath, the bold giant,
 Whose fate you read upon his bloody brow ;
 Hot pride still blazing in his eyes defiant :
 The terrified wretches shriek, and cringe, and bow,—
 He heeds them not, but tramples lord and client
 Relentlessly beneath those claws of fire,
 That hiss and smoke amid the moving mire.

In his huge hand he whirls a brazen mace
 Large as a battering-ram, broad, thick, and rough,
 With spearlike spikes—woe worth the hapless race
 On whose bare backs descends the heavy cuff !
 Rage lights his red eyes, laughter swells his face,
 And echoes in his curses cruel and gruff,
 Like Churchill chuckling o'er the thuds he wrote,
 Or Johnson, when the bibliopole he smote.

And here, as we have wandered far and wide,
 And half our hellish task's not yet complete,
 I've no objection for an hour to bide :—
 There is a very cosy, cool retreat
 Hidden in yonder Star, to which I'll guide
 Your baronship, if you'll but risk the feat ;
 The Witch of Endor lives there—it looks distant,
 And so it is, but *I* am your assistant.

I'm sure the Lady will be glad to see us,
 She has not seen a man like you since Saul ;
 I will not promise that she'll dine or tea us,
 But she'll be flattered by our evening call.
 Perhaps we'll see Calypso ; be as free as
 You please with the fair ladies, great and small ;
 Your ancient gallantry I long to see
 Revived with us, and so I'm sure will she.

Here comes a splendid Steed in strength rejoicing,
 Whose mane like lightning glitters on the blast,
 Pawing the air in pride ; his neigh outvoicing
 The thunder's boom ; his neck and shoulders vast
 Armed with white wings, his motion equipoising,
 He flashes on with swiftness unsurpast
 By any horse since Pegasus, or the Griffin,
 Which bore Rogèro when he flew sans tiffin,

Or lunch, or dinner, to the silver moon,
 In search of some one's wits ; but what seems queer,
 This beast has human feet—a wondrous boon,
 Whose use, however, does not seem so clear :
 Ceres o'ertaken one hot afternoon
 By lusty Neptune, when no help was near,
 Produced, some ten months after, this brave horse,
 Which caused that virtuous woman great remorse.

Ho ! ho ! my dainty Steed ! my sweet Areion,
 I pray thee let's ascend thy splendid back ;
 We're rather tired of viewing Satan's Zion,
 And mean to enter on a different track.

Ireion.

Up and away, and welcome, my bold lion,
I'll bear you through the very Zodiack.

Mephistopheles.

You need not carry me so very far,
I merely want to reach Dame Endor's Star.

Ireion.

Gladly I'll take you and your portly friend ;—
So—so—well done : you've mounted briskly, sirs !
Through the Moon sphere our flight we first must bend ;
So cold—you need to be wrapped up in furs :
And here, methinks, while near her we ascend,
And wonder why she so moves barking curs,
You'll tell me, if 'tis true, as oft I've heard—

Mephistopheles.

I'll answer anything, howe'er absurd.

Ireion.

'Tis said, then, that the women in the Moon
Lay eggs from which babes twelve feet tall are hatched ?

Mephistopheles.

These are the ravings of some sick buffoon,
Whose wit and impudence were both unmatched,
That sphere deserted boasts not such a boon ;
It pines alone from other stars detached ;
A melancholy ruin without life,
And consequently without man and wife.

Dante declares that in his flight he saw,
 Confined within the range of Luna's sphere,
 Nuns in whose chastity there was a flaw,
 Who lent to wheedling monks a willing ear ;
 Since the bard's day that planet's silvery scraw
 Has had from fire so many a dreadful sear,
 'Tis nought at present but a mass of cinder,
 Catching the sun's light like a piece of tinder.

Swedenborg, too, or else I much mistake,
 Said he saw Spirits in her ruined pile ;
 He must have been asleep, not wide awake,
 Or looked at her for much too brief a while :
 The Moon is nothing but a globe opaque
 Of cavern, desert, mountain, quicksand vile,
 Where mortals could not live, and only Witches
 Resort to for their tempest-riding switches.

Lucian in his *True History* indeed
 (So called, because it is a mass of lies)
 Says he was taken once with whirlwind speed
 Up to the Moon through several leagues of skies,
 Where he beheld a very curious breed,
 Half horse, half vulture, much to his surprise ;
 Who are its strange inhabitants, and are ruled
 By King Endymion, erst from Latmos fooled.

He swears there are no women, but the males
 Marry each other, and beget queer folks
 From the calf o' the leg : they none of them have tails,
 But a green cabbage ; gla'ss they wear for cloaks ;
 On roasted frogs they dine ; and each exhales
 When dead to air—the thing is all a hoax—

As you can see, for Lucian loved such waggery,
As Irishmen love wit in want and raggery.

And after Lucian several mad impostors,
Aping his wondrous wild and shrewd grimace,
And caring nought for creeds and paternosters,
Have penned such histories about this place,
Describing what it holds and what it fosters,
As if to falsehood's goal they ran a race ;—
And so i' faith they did, and having won
The goal in Hell we roast them there like fun !

Goethe.

What frightful Chasm of Ice is this we see,
Broad as the Alpine mountains, and as bare,
A cold bleak wind blows o'er it ?

Mephistopheles.

List to me ;
Don't gaze upon 't, or if you do, you'll fare
Worse than did Phæthon when trying to flee
In the sun's course. To free you from all care
I will amuse you with a legend light,
To keep your eyes from this horrific sight.

In sylvan Thessaly there dwelt a youth,
Leucippus was his name, and he was wed
Unto a nymph as beautiful as Truth,
Or silver starlight o'er the waters shed :
And yet he passed his days in sports uncouth,
In the lone woods, nor ever homeward sped,
Until the night had wrapped the world in shade,
And goblins plied their wild and shadowy trade.

From the first beams that ushered in the dawn,
 Till the dark hour of night his gentle spouse
 Was left alone, like some deserted fawn,
 Whose dam has gone on far-off hills to browse ;
 While he with hound and spear o'er grove and lawn,
 Wandered more freely than the law allows,—
 I mean the good old law of man and wife,
 Which says that each with each is joined for life.

But little cared Leucippus for old saws,
 Or modern instances, or curtain talk ;
 He swore he did not value them three straws ;
 He likewise swore no woman born should baulk
 His will, or to a single wish give pause,
 Much less prevent his darling woodland walk :—
 And then he whistled to his panting hounds,
 And went as usual forth upon his rounds.

He was in sooth a self-willed wayward wight,
 A sportsman's faults were all the faults he had,
 The boar, the pard, the lynx from morn till night,
 He followed like a man grown hunting-mad ;
 For these he left his beautiful and bright
 Young bride, whose smiles would make a Cynic glad ;
 For these o'er hills and dales and glens he chased,
 Which proves this young man had but little taste.

Weary and wet at midnight home he'd come,
 And go to bed, and straightway fall asleep ;
 His limbs fatigued, and sometimes cold and numb
 He lay beside her like a lifeless heap ;
 To his wife's gentle poutings he was dumb ;
 Nay, though he often heard her sigh and weep,

It made no change, but after brief repose,
When the cock crew as usual he rose.

His fair young wife, Pallenè, who in vain
Had sought to know the reason of his ways,
And guessed, and guessed, and even guessed again,
What strange attraction caused these long delays
In the green forest, while she sate in pain,
Resolved to live no longer in a maze,
But by a rare and arch device find out
The secret that confused her soul with doubt.

Accordingly at daybreak up she rose,
And donned a vesture of the darkest green,
Like a young forester ; no shoon or hose ;
She wore, her tender legs from thorns to screen ;
They gleamed more beauteously than mountain snows,
Or lily flowers, or Phœbè's silver sheen ;
And forth she wandered, trembling like a dove :—
Such things will women do for those they love.

Ne'er had a form so exquisitely fair
With eyes so lovely, or with face so sweet,
Trode the green woods since Dian had been there,
With the bright huntress train of Nymphs who meet
In groves, near fountains, or by lonely lair,
To hunt the game, or dance with silvery feet,
Beneath the yellow moonbeams, when the stars,
Walk out and shine through Heaven's sapphire bars.

To the wild wood she wandered all alone ;
She did not hint the matter to her maids ;

Like a young bird that from its nest has flown,
 She panted as she saw the lonesome shades ;
 Her cheek grew cold as any Parian stone ;
 The bright rose even from her soft cheeks fades—
 She shakes all over, fears she knows not what,
 And hides herself beneath a friendly grot.

Fleetly flashed o'er the plain her husband's hounds,
 To rouse the lynx, the deer, or brindled pard ;
 With their loud bays the echoing wood rebounds,
 No voice to check, no watchful eye to guard
 Their headlong speed, or thirst of blood—the sounds
 Startled Pallenè, pale and evil-starred,
 Within the thicket, and she swooned away ;
 Her eyes grew dead and cold as any clay.

Lured by the scent of flesh, the dogs pursued,
 Where her soft footsteps marked the velvet grass,
 Into the bosom of the verdant wood,
 Wherein Pallenè lay, a senseless mass
 Of life, by faint and terrible fear subdued ;
 And there, these fierce-mouthed dogs, alas ! alas !
 Tore her poor body with their teeth and claws ;
 Her warm heart's blood embathed their reeking jaws.

Scarce had the deed been done, when to that place
 Leucippus came ; he thought 'twas a wild beast :
 But when he saw that fair and chiding face,
 On which his bloodhounds made their horrid feast,
 His past neglect of that fair fallen grace,
 Rose up before him, and at length increased
 His griefs so much, he fell upon his spear,
 And died for her, too late, alas ! grown dear.

The sylvans found their bodies, and brought leaves
From all the loveliest trees around that bloom,
And buried them ; the nymphs, when golden eve's
Green-gleaming stars come forth, and all illume,
Go to their graves and weep ; Cythèris weaves
In heaven a garland of its rich perfume,
And hangs it daily o'er the slumbering pair,
Who never slept so happily as there.

The gentleman was here some fifty years,
But after that was sent to join his wife ;
And since, for aught that now at least appears,
They've passed a very pleasant sort of life ;
I think of her when those base mutineers,
The Danaïds, meet my gaze, who used the knife
So ruthlessly upon their hapless spouses—
They are in Hell, while she in Heaven houses.

They disappear in the Clouds.

SCENE VI.

THE MOON SPHERE.

An innumerable multitude of weird SHAPES passing rapidly along in misty twilight. Distant thunders and flashes of lightning. In the extreme distance MEPHISTOPHELES and GOETHE are faintly beheld, flying rapidly through the air. A splendid Heavenly FORM is also seen far and far away, which seems to watch their forward march with anxiety and agony deeply blended. She is surrounded by a shining rainbow-light of dazzling loveliness.

Herbs.

In the chrysolite splendours of Eastern Kâf,
 In the golden halls of our king Arzshenk,
 The wine forbidden by fools we quaff,
 Or cage up the Peris, like poor Baron Trenck.
 We haunt the dark caves of that mountain land,
 In the form of red dragon, our gold we keep,
 Or like onagers traverse the desert sand,
 And steal on our foes as they dream in sleep.
 In iron prisons we hang up the dears,
 And drench their plumes in the hail and rain,
 We mock their cries, and we scoff at their tears,
 And blow them about, as the winds blow the vane,
 With ram-like horns, and ugly paws,
 With saucer-eyes, and with shaggy hair,
 And tails that we *won't* cut off, because
 Their waggings, 'tis said, delight the fair ;—
 If you like our portraits, and feel inclined
 To join us, you know where our haunts to find.

Will o' the Wisp.

Now by Pan, a very splendid pageant
 Seems in prospect for Lord Satan's people,
 All the young and old of Hell are coming.
 Since king Solomon's weird conjuration,
 When by spells, at which Creation trembled,
 All the strongest Demons he imprisoned
 In the brazen coffer, and consigned it,
 Sealed with seals ten thousand, to the waters,
 Of the mighty Babylonian river,
 We've not had so fine a monster meeting.
 Lucky was it for these noble regions,
 That his faithful subjects, sagely deeming
 The vast coffer held unbounded treasures,
 And with sacred thirst of money panting,
 Brought it to the light and broke it open,
 Thus releasing the astonished Demons,
 Who feel very grateful to the Rabbis.

Spectra Meridiana.

Why are all those Sorcerers assembled
 Does Lord Satan meditate a foray ?
 On Saint Michael's manors in high heaven ?

Will o' the Wisp.

Silence up there, ye poor Noon-day Devils !
 What have ye to do with Satan's secrets ?
 Imitate the wise and loyal people
 Of the Earth, who very seldom bother
 Kings and Rulers by enquiring nicely :
 Imitate them, and take all for granted,
 As the essence choice of wit and wisdom.
 Swinish multitudes of men and spirits

When they poke their noses in state secrets
 Merit—what?—Why, what their Masters give them,
 Halters, cart-tails, gibbets, gaols, and exile.

Spectra Meridiana.

Did you ever hear such daring freedom?
 That a Gleam of Fire, sans soul or body,
 Should address us subjects of Lord Satan,
 With such ribaldry and scornful mocking,
 Is a novelty; but times are altered;
 Everything seems rolling topsy turvy;
 Kings are kicked about like common people;
 Having scarcely time to shave their whiskers;
 Red republicans proclaim their madness,
 Even in Tartarus; this marsh-born Lantern
 Seems to have imbibed disgraceful notions.

Belial.

I gave him a ride in the mirk midnight,
 I saddled him on my coal black steed;
 Halloo! Halloo! and we galloped along
 O'er mountain and valley, and stream and mead:
 The blasphemous monk;—he prayed to the Pope,
 And he prayed to the Devil: the first was tipsy
 In the hold of a Florentine gipsy:
 But Satan was casting his horoscope;
 Whereby it appeared 'twas his fate to die
 Of a surfeit huge of meat and wine;
 I dropped him down at an alderman's door,
 And ere the sun sets this monk is mine.

The Wild Huntsman.

Halloo! Halloo! Halloo! Halloo!
 The tempests black, and the lightnings blue

Are howling, and flashing, and scowling, and crashing,
 The forests are groaning, the rivers are moaning,
 The owlets are hooting, the fen fires are shooting,
 The wild beasts cower in cavern and bower,
 The trees are affrighted, the fiends are delighted,
 The stars are hidden, the moon is forbidden
 To shew her white light in the eldritch night,
 The rain is falling, the torrents are brawling,
 The hail stones rattle, the night birds twattle,
 The witches are cursing and blasting the cattle,
 Halloo ! Halloo ! Halloo ! Halloo !

What a midnight is this for the Devil's crew,
 What an opportune moment their hell-broth to brew ;
 Like broad-winged vultures we course through the air
 Hunting the Moss-Women everywhere,

And the skeleton trees grasp the hags by the hair,
 And we mock their shrieks of wild despair,
 And we drive them like gray rats here and there,
 Halloo ! Halloo ! Halloo ! Halloo !

Here's a quarter for you, and a quarter for you,
 Quick, hounds of hell, and your game pursue,
 Halloo ! Halloo ! what a savoury stew,
 We shall have when our hunt is up—Halloo !

Gamigin.

I dressed myself up as a gallant young Knight,
 And I courted a damsel fair ;
 At her father's castle I danced and supped,
 And we were the bonniest pair.

There sat a grave priest at the banquet board,
 And he eyed me o'er and o'er ;
 I laughed and I carolled, I ogled the maid,
 But he scanned me till I swore.

I felt for my dagger, 'twas fixed in my belt,
 And I gave the priest a look ;
 But he winced not a jot, while I felt as he gazed,
 That the blood my cheek forsook.

He pulled out the Volume of Truth from his poke
 And read a chapter of Mark ;
 While his cold gray eye froze up my veins,
 As if he were a shark.

He looked at me straight with a terrible stare,
Avaunt, in God's name, quoth he ;
 And scarce had he spoke, when I felt myself off,
 Three thousand miles at sea.

The damsel screamed, and the priest he prayed,
 My footmen three fell down ;—
 They were felons whose corpses I brought from the gibbet,
 That hung outside the town.

Serpent Othor.

Upon my life you got off very well ;
 Had he used holy water you'd have been
 So blistered that you must have kept your bed,
 And lost the chance of figuring in these halls,
 Where your adventures cannot fail to please.

Zagan.

I stood in the garb of a country clown
 Beside the river's brink ;
 The stream was rapid, the stream was muddy,

And there came a monk whose cheeks were ruddy
 With blossoms of noble drink.

And the Athanasian Creed.

Ho, fellow, quoth he ;—I made a bow ;—
 Ho, fellow, the stream runs deep,
 Thou must take me across on thy bull-like back ;—
 What ! a paunch like thine, quoth I, alack !
 I never could lift such a heap,

With your Athanasian Creed.

I'll curse thee, quoth he, with bell and book,
 And candle too, to boot—
 If thou dost not fetch me across in a crack ;—
 He laid his staff across my back,
 I took up the swollen brute,

With his Athanasian Creed.

And into the river I went like an ass,
 Bearing the lusty monk ;
 How I wish, quoth I, as we got to the middle,
 Paganini were here with his fiddle.
 Zounds, fool, quoth he, thou'rt drunk,

With your Athanasian Creed.

I should like to see thee dance, quoth I,
 The dance called a saraband ;
 Or in the mazurka's graceful twirl,
 Thine arms around some winsome girl ;—
 And then I came to a stand,

With my Athanasian Creed.

Go on, quoth the monk, go on, thou knave,
 In the Blessèd Virgin's name ;—
 The words had scarcely left his tongue,
 When the lusty monk in the mud I flung,
 And laughing here I came,

With the Athanasian Creed.

And whether the cherubs came down from heaven,
 To pull the stuff-gut out ;
 Or left him there to feed the fishes
 (If they eat him they'll make most dainty dishes)
 I'll not cudgel my brains about,

Nor the Athanasian Creed.

Balisargon.

There was a Magician who lived in the East,

With a heigho, tira, la, la !

Who very much wished that his skill was encreased,
 And smiled when to Satan his spirit he leased ;—
 You shall have it for ever when I am deceased ;
 You're the man for me, quoth Satan !

It was part of the bargain they made at the time,

With a heigho, tira, la, la !

That this noble Magician when years 'gan to grime,
 His benevolent face should not sink into slime,
 But be made young again in his manhood's new prime ;—
 I'll do it, of course, quoth Satan !

Now it happened one day that the mighty Mogul,

With a heigho, tira, la, la !

In his golden Zenana felt horribly dull ;
 And cried he, is there no one his monarch can lull

Into pleasure? I feel myself thick in the skull ;—
Here's a man for me, quoth Satan !

The cunning Magician was called and displayed,
With a heigho, tira, la, la !
All the wonderful, thunderful tricks of his trade ;
He sat in the air, and he miracles made ;
He changed an Arabian steed into a spade :—
All very fine bosh, quoth Satan !

The Mighty Mogul scarcely looked at his tricks,
With a heigho, tira, la, la !
He saw him make oak trees shoot out of dry sticks ;
And beautiful turtle doves warble from bricks ;
You deserve, says he, far fewer halfpence than kicks ;—
I agree with you, quoth Satan !

So spake the Mogul ; the Magician grew pale ;
With a heigho, tira, la, la !
If you think by this nonsense your prince to regale,
Depend on it, Master Magician, you'll fail ;
Ho, guards there, and take the impostor to jail !—
And he merits it well, quoth Satan !

The Magician reflected a moment and said,
'With a heigho, tira, la, la !
If it please your Mogulship, I'll cut off my head,
And come to life afterwards, though I've been dead ;—
If you do, says Mogul, upon gold you shall tread.
You're a very nice man, quoth Satan !

Quoth Mag to himself, 'tis expressed in the deed,
With a heigho, tira, la, la !

That Satan to make me a young man agreed ;
 He is bound by his bond, and he cannot recede ;
 He must do it then presently, such is my need ;—
 How clever you are, quoth Satan !

He cut off his head with a keen shaving knife,
With a heigho, tira, la la !
 Expecting of course to come back into life,
 A most elegant youth, looking out for a wife,
 And merrily dancing to tabor and fife ;—
 You'll never come back, quoth Satan !

In a minute or so, he was plunged in hell fire,
With a heigho, tira, la, la !
 He protested ; we told him when once men expire,
 'Tis impossible then to concede their desire :—
 Says Mogul, Why he's dead, what a horrible liar !
 A liar indeed, quoth Satan !

The Devil on Two Sticks.

I'll tell you a tale that will move you to laughter,
A tale of my jealous wife !
 She was told t'other day I was scampering after
 A beautiful Succubus, Stolas by name,
 For whom I professed a most desperate flame ;
 In whose company all of my leisure I passed,
 And was spending the gold that of yore I amassed ;
What a tale for a jealous wife !

The wild Teuton huntsman, Sondennah, revealed it ;—
This freak of my jealous wife !
 He said, 'twas a secret, and so I concealed it ;

I dressed up a broomstick with fine painted face,
 With garments of gold, satin, velvet, and lace ;
 A veil like bright heaven I flung o'er the doll,
 And down on a sofa I laid her to loll ;

What a sight for a jealous wife !

My spouse she came by, and flew into a passion,

A trick with a jealous wife !

She rushed at the lady, who seemed out of fashion ;
 She pulled off her petticoats, laces, and veil,
 She tore her fine raiment with tooth and with nail ;
 But Lard ! how she stared when she found 'twas a stick,
 And Lard ! how I laughed at the notable trick ;—

For a rantipole, jealous wife !

Chimæra.

The leaf is tossed about by the wind,
 The bird is blown about in the skies,
 The fish is whelmed about in the wave,
 Alas ! what a demon dark is Fate.
 They are old, and stark, and cold ;
 But this year only, they sprang to life,
 Whence comest thou, Ogress ?

Hellona.

I come from the field, where the dying and dead
 Are mingled and mangled in carnage red,
 Where Rage and Madness, Revenge and Craft,
 At God's mild lessons of mercy laughed ;
 Where the wild contending tumult rose,
 And they lapped up the blood of their fallen foes ;

Where the garments were tangled with clotted gore,
And the blasphemous shout made my veins stand froze ;
Where Might crushed Right, and the strong man grew
A pitiless fiend as he cursed and slew :
Where the motherless orphan was tramped down
In the dust, by the hoof of the blood-stained clown ;
And the shelterless virgin was seized and spoiled
By the ruffian soldier that round her coiled ;
And the silver hairs of meek old age
Appealed to, but cooled not the murderer's rage,
And women and babes were slain like beasts,
With javelins blessed by Christ's own priests ;
Where the scream of terror and yell of pain,
Were answered with laughter and fierce disdain ;
Where the temple erected to God was stripped,
And men were thumb-screwed, and matrons whipped ;
And the savage conqueror made his jest
Of the shrieking maidens' wild request ;
And the cellars were ransacked for wine to fire
Their brutal passions to frenzy dire ;
And every man seemed a hound of hell
Let loose to do Satan's business well ;
And pillage grew legal, and theft grew right,
And men made carrion for wolf and kite ;
And the God of Battles was thanked for aid
('Twas Hell they meant, though to Christ they prayed)
And the general swore 'twas the grandest deed,
That ever was witnessed on wave or mead ;
And the fallen were naked stripped, and flung
Into a horrible ditch, like dung ;
And prayers were offered and bulletins sent
And cut-throats were thanked by Parliament ;

And the people, whose well-taxed pockets must pay,
Got drunk for joy of that glorious day.

Mephistopheles, (to GOETHE.)

What do you think of this horrible Beldam?

Thus to chatter—fie, for shame!

Is she not a monstrous bunter?

Shall I make you a little game?

To BELLONA.

Now then old Wickedness, what brings thee hither?
Looking, methinks, more ugly than a Harpy.

Bellona.

O! thou base and blear-eyed Hangman,
Rakehell, Hector, Squint-eye, Shark,
Bubble, Addlepate, Snip, Bumpkin,
Dog-heart, is it thus you bark?

Mephistopheles.

Jilt, Coquette, Shrew, Vixen, Hussy,
Slattern, Fish-fag, Trollop, Drab,
Harridan, Virago, Scarecrow,
Cease your low and vulgar gab.

Bellona.

Blunder-head, Hunks, Cutthroat, Fumbler,
Jesuit, Lackbrain, Madman, Drone,
Antic, Blusterer, Cackler, Topper,
Won't you let the sex alone?

Mephistopheles.

Beldam, Gadabout, Jade, Gipsy,
 Tribad, Hoyden, Skinflint, Quean,
 Fidget, Flirt, Minx, Doxy, Callet,
 Ne'er was such a Granny seen.

Hellona.

Bow-legged Boozer, Ape, Apostate,
 Chicken-hearted Maffler, Grub,
 Numskull, Slanderer, base Skedaddler,
 Dare you thus a lady snub?

Mephistopheles.

Flaunter, Harlot, Minion, Blowen,
 Pinchgut, ducklegged Strumpet, Hag,
 Hatchet-face, Night-walker, Wanton—
 Is it thus your tongue you wag?

Hellona.

Buffle-headed sophist, Gabbler,
 Reptile, Squabblers, Puppy, Sneak,
 Blobberlip, Wasp, Crackbrain, Buffer,
 Shame upon you thus to speak!

Mephistopheles.

Gibcat, She-dog, Mother-abbess.
 Brimstone, Termagant, Witch, Thief,
 Fright, She-dragon, wrinkled Tabby,
 Cut this beastly quarrel brief.

Hellona.

Ass-head, Blackmoor, Cuckoo, Dotard,
 Splay foot, Yelper, wry-necked Wretch,
 Skulker, Flunky, Horse-face, Stuffgut,
 Heaven make me thy Jack Ketch !

Mephistopheles.

Whipster, Gorgon, Pug-nose, Dog-face,
 Hair-brained Trull, Grimalkin, Flirt,
 Demirep, Lacedmutton, Gadder ;
Do give over flinging dirt.

Hellona.

Blusterer, Saucebox, Smell-feast, Weasel,
 Swasher, Swaggerer, Princock, Chuff,
 Trickster, Shuffler, Lazar, Bow-leg,
 Hast thou not yet had enough ?

Mephistopheles.

Tell-tale, Jillet, Vagrant, Fibber,
 Blouze, Coquette, Slut, Gaptooth, Cow ;
 Grannum, Henpecker, Empusa—

Aside.

Faith ! I *must* give over now.

Hellona.

Fuddler, Slimgut, Tippler, Thickskull,
 Spitfire, Sponger, Upstart, Clumps,
 Costard, Couple-beggar, Duffer,
 You look handsome in your dumps.
 Snob, Poltroon, Dwarf, Fool, Gull-catcher,
 Loggerhead, Impostor base ;
 Juggler, Crookback, limping Cripple,

Broken nose and Pimple-face,
 Poor lickspittle, frowsy fellow,
 Bastard brat with stinking breath :
 Cur, Curmudgeon, Chuffcat, Cuckold,
 Baldpate, Dirt, I'll be your death.
 Frosty-face barbarian, Savage,
 Codger, Spooney, Fogie, Ass,
 Vile Mohock, Screw, Gaby, Gudgeon,
 Did you hope scot-free to pass ?
 Lily-livered Tossopot, Lubber,
 Crackhemp, Cullion, Blabber, Boor,
 Vile bog-trotter, Whipper-snapper,
 You're a pretty god, I'm sure.
 Dastard, Donkey, Whiffler, Shaveling,
 Base skipkennel, Loafer, Bull-head,
 Foul footlicker, Skimble-skamble,
 Have I put sense in your dull-head ?
 Shatter-pate, Swinge-buckler, Boggler,
 Chatterpie, Bamboozler, Dodger,
 Meacock, Buzzer, poor Fopdoodle,
 You're a pretty first floor lodger !
 Snuffler, Loggerhead and Splutterer,
 Beetlebrow, Gull-catcher, Viper ;
 Hiccius-docius, bull-eyed Stutterer,
 I will make you pay the piper.

Mephistopheles.

Let us be off : I own I'm fairly beaten.

Will o' the Wisp.

Ochone ! Ochone ! Ullagone ! Ullagone !
 I never saw Voland so overthrown :

By the wearer of a female zone.
 See, how he lies, poor fellow, prone,
 Tumbled as 'twere from a lofty throne ;
 Thank heaven I've not a wife of my own,
 She'd very soon make me moan and groan,
 If I dared with her to pick a bone.

Tomtegubbe.

The Devil, he stands by his furnace bright,
 And watches the soul with gleesome eye,
 While circling round in the fierce red light,
 The imps in horrible chorus cry.
 Halloo ! Halloo ! the horny crew,
 Are laughing, and prancing, and shouting too ;
 Halloo ! Halloo ! their fires burn blue,
 The baleful Catapes of Hell cry mew ;
 For an hour is nigh,
 When the soul shall fly,
 From Furies grim to its kindred sky :
 And the starry train
 Shall the soul regain,
 That bursts for ever the Furies' chain.

Mephistopheles.

Why how now, ruffian ! what means this prediction ?
 Well done, Areion, you have kicked him finely ;
 But here we are ; we've reached the Witch's drawing room,
 Let us dismount, and make our—midnight call.

Will o' the Wisp.

Save us ! what a host of Grannies,
 Old, lame, blear-eyed, pale, foul, wrinkled ;

Thunder, lightning, hail, and tempest,
Leaping round them as they enter.
These are they who send sharp twitches
To their enemies ; make horses
Kick their riders, till they cast them :
Stick sharp needles through men's livers,
And make barren men and women.
These are they who dance with Demons,
In the shape of ass, wolf, ferret,
Cow, ape, hound, dog, wolf, or weasel ;
But to toads they are most partial.
And they sail at sea in eggshells.
That old Hag, the Witch of Endor,
Heads them : those who follow after,
Hight Calypso, and Armida,
Are as fair as stars in seeming,
But are truly horrid Beldams,
Yellow, speckled, full of poisons,
Loathsome as a crew of lepers,
Breathing venom, skinny, rotten,
Though like Graces for the moment ;—
And the things that pass for Cupids
Are but adders, toads, and vipers,
Curiously disguised by magic :
What a multitude of wretches
Have they tempted to perdition !
But they saw the outside only ;
Had they viewed the rank pollution
Underneath these flimsy phantoms,
They'd have started back in horror,
As from pits of snakes and adders.

SCENE VI.

THE WITCH'S MASQUE.

Goethe.

A strange and shadowy place it seems, but full
Of marvellous beauty, of departed worlds,
Mysterious wonders, and Thessalian magic.

Witch of Endor.

Hail, Mephistopheles ! young stranger, hail !

Mephistopheles.

Who have you with you ? Any one, my Venus ?

Witch of Endor.

Only Calypso and rose-cheeked Armida ;
The witch Alcina will be here anon.

Mephistopheles.

Then bring them hither ; this young spark of Frankfort
Longs to behold their beauty.

Witch of Endor.

As you please.

MEPHISTOPHELES *and the WITCH converse apart.*

Goethe.

Who comes here with Bacchal train,
Waving his vine-circled thyrses ?

Satyr.

Comus, Comus, tipsy Comus,
A most noble boon companion.

Aside.

These will teach our gallant finely.

Comus (The scene described passes in panoramic show.)

Fill freely up the nectar cup—

The lily-skirted Spring's at hand,
And stretched on flowers enjoy the hours,
While Wit and Mirth your brows expand.

With garlands crowned we'll dance around,
Our ringlets floating in the breeze,
To winds we'll fling our cares, and sing
Like nightingales in sweet rose-trees.

To forests wend, 'my faithful friend,
And drink the daughter of the vine ;
From urns of gold, whose bosoms hold
Rose-bright Delight and Joys divine.

Behold this rose whose purple glows—
To-morrow comes, its beauty fades ;
So life flits by—then gaily lie
On rosy beds with laughing maids.

Driapus.

Here's another jolly fellow.

Cupid.

Now the Rose has unveiled her beautiful head,
Come hither, come hither, sweet choir of pleasures ;

Ere Youth and its time of delight be dead,
 Let the dance and song and bowl be our treasures ;
 And wine, wine, nectar-like wine ;
 Oh ! better by far than priest or shrine.

Send me hither the maiden with laugh of light,
 And eyes—fond eyes like my wine-cups glowing,
 Te kiss me, and fold in her arms milk-white,
 While the zephyrs are softly around us flowing,
 And the lyre—the sweet-voiced lyre,
 Oh ! better by far than bead or friar.

The Rose is the queen of all flowers o' the field,
 Wine quenches at times the torch of passion ;
 O bird of night, be thy voice unsealed !
 Sing forth once more in thine angel fashion ;
 The roses—my lute—and glass,
 Oh ! better by far than monk or mass.

Chorus of NYMPHS and CUPIDS.

Silenus.

Bathe your sorrows in the bowl,
 Brimming o'er with laughing wine,
 Or when moonlight gilds the pole,
 In some rosy grove recline ;
 Stealing raptures from the maids
 Who frequent the leafy glades.

When the nymph with footsteps light,
 Dances o'er the meadows fair,
 Bind a garland, golden bright,
 Round her hyacinthine hair ;
 Cupid sometimes sits inside
 Roses thus for maidens tied.

When the softly-sounding lyre,
 Breathes its music sweet and low.
 To some flowery cave retire,
 Where the silver waters flow :
 Lulled in happy visions deep,
 There securely rest asleep.

Purple spring brings joy like these,
 With its laughing atmosphere ;
 Oh ! be mine Elysian ease,
 In this season of the year.
 All the joys for which I've prayed,—
 Wine-cup, cave, and dancing-maid.

Dance of COMUS, NYMPHS, and CUPIDS.

Mephistopheles.

Now shalt thou such priceless treasures
 Of rare excellence beholding,
 Own that I'm of friends the truest.
 Eyes, whose glances are bright heaven,
 Breasts, whose roses hold all pleasures,
 Arms, in whose embrace enfolding,
 Live the true Elysian raptures ;
 Words more sweet than Lydian measures ;
 Charms like these are rarely given,
 Nymphs like these one rarely captures.
 Lo ! a wind like lovers' breathings,
 Wafting here Sabœa's richness.
 See, the first is bright Calypso,
 She it was who loved Ulysses
 In Ogygia's lonely island ;
 She it was, whose magic ringlets
 Twined around his heart like jesses :

From her eyes the stars drink lustre,
As the Ind bird drinks the moonbeams ;
Blest is he who, by her ringlets,
Draws her to his glad embraces.
Blest is he who in her sweetness
Vermeil-tinctured tastes enjoyment.
O'er her queenly robe translucent
Shines her neck like brightest sunbeams,
Her red lips are rowan-berries,
Brilliant, melting, warm, and dewy ;
And her teeth are showers of pearls ;
Or like pure white honeycombs :
Branching hair with beryls braided ;
Did an Anchorite behold her,
He might take her for the Virgin ;
But she's not the Queen of Heaven,
For she wears the cest of Venus.
Wilt thou dwell with her for ever ?

After her comes wild Alcina,
Ariosto's Queen of magic,
With a cup of splendid diamond,
Glittering on its jewelled column :
And a wand that flashes sunlight.
Tall and slender as the pine tree,
Lovely as the beauteous cassia,
Or the Orient myrrh of sweetness,
Or the palm tree in the desert,
Or the golden gates of morning,
Or the spring of sunny pinions,
Gleaming o'er the grapy Rhine-land.
Swift she speeds across the gardens,

Like a star across the welkin ;
Where she treads spring purple roses,
When she smiles it is a sunburst,
Breaking through the silver heaven.
Does she speak ? It is the dove coo,
Or the music of the warbler
Chanting in the early summer.
Down her neck the amber glories
Of her flower-twisted tresses
Sweep unto her purple sandals.
Bright and pure as moonlight mirrored
In the eyes of some lone fountain ;
Fringed with honey-lipped narcissus
Is her soul-delighting bosom.
In her eyes love's gentle lightnings
Softly play and sweetly glitter,
Wilt thou dwell with her for ever ?

See who follows—'tis Armida,
The rose-smiling Fay of Tasso ;
On whose liliated breasts Rinaldo,
Lapped in love as in some bower
Of red roses and white hyacinths,
Felt on earth the bliss of heaven.
O'er the asphodels she gambols.
Since my kinsman Angel Gabriel
Greeted lovely Ladye Mary,
Ne'er saw spirit finer creature.—
Witching woman like this wonder
Won the angels erst from heaven,
If *such* fell—why we should pardon
Mortals who do nothing blacker.
'Tis a wise man's act to gather

Roses when they grow around him ;—
 Or to pluck the melting vine-grape,
 When it lies across his pathway.
 Wilt thou dwell with her for ever ?

Goethe.

O Beauty—Beauty ! I am dumb with wonder.

Mephistopheles.

These ambrosial nymphs are better
 Than the fires we late stood viewing ;
 Even the kiss of melting Venus,
 When you handed her the apple,
 Was not half so spirit-thrilling
 As the violet eyes and ringlets
 Of the green-robed Queen Calypso.
 See, in young Armida's eyelids,
 What a naked Cupid trembles :—
 How he shoots their magic through you !
 Blithe his laugh of silver cadence ;
 While the greenwood queen, Alcina,
 Half apart, but half advancing,
 Smiles, as smiled the crescent goddess
 O'er Endymion of Latmos.
 Don't you feel these contemplations,
 More delightful than the rigid
 Stoic nonsense you would have me
 Think you're bent upon ?—I wonder
 You have not quite soured my temper ;
 But I learned from Job true patience,
 When I saw my master Satan
 Kick him out upon the dunghill.

Calypso.

Who is the stranger whom you would present?

Witch of Endor.

'Tis Lord Satan's secretary.

Hephistopheles.

Yes—he tells me all his wishes,
Secrets and sublime ambitions.
Know my friend—a German statesman,
Wise as your old flame, Ulysses.

Armidia.

Well, he seems a knightly gallant.

Witch of Endor.

Saul himself looked never nobler.

Hephistopheles.

We have come enchanting ladies,
To sojourn awhile, and revel
In these bowers, far outshining
The six heavens of Mohammed,
Or the sunbright spheres of Indra,
Or the Gardens of Adonis,
Or the viewless Bowers of Irim,
Or the apple-bearing Aden,
Or the Fields of Asphodel,
Or the fair Elysian flower-land,
Or the clashing halls of Odin,
Or the starlight orbs of Brahma,

Or the golden land Flathinnis,
 Or the radiant realm of Swerga,
 Or the ocean isle Hybrazil,
 Or the Islands of the Blessèd,
 Or the grandly proud Walhalla.

Witch of Endor.

We shall be indeed delighted
 Such fair travellers to welcome.
 Lo!—I wave my wand of magic,
 And a banquet spreads before ye.
 These young Cupids crowned with roses
 And with lilies, in whose eyelids
 Shines the softness of the moonlight,
 And with wings of gold and purple
 Waving melody, will serve ye.
 Sit, brave sir, beside this Lady—
 On this bank of fan-like flowers.
 You, Sir Voland, couch beside me ;
 While we banquet sweet Calypso
 Will with magic lays enweave us
 In a rosy spell of rapture.

Calypso.

Nay, I will not ; I would rather
 Thus with arms entwined embrace him.

Mephistopheles.

Well, I think you shew your wisdom.

Aside.

He drinks magic from her bosom.

Calypso (to GOETHE.)

Taste this cup of heavenly nectar ;
Drink it as the gods ambrosia.

Goethe.

Music, music, song and music.

Witch of Endor.

Thou, Armida, wilt thou sing us
Some of thine Italian triumphs ?

Mephistopheles.

Nay, my much respected Madam,
Let Armida talk to me.

Witch of Endor.

What ! will none oblige me ? am I
Slighted in old age, Sir Voland ?
Must I sing a song myself ?

Mephistopheles (*aside*).

Dis forefend it ! (*Aloud*) Nay sweet Venus,
For *my* part I'd sooner look at,
In their sweet dishevelled beauty,
The past heroines of story,
Than hear melodies at present.
This my friend his tastes are classic,
Such a spectacle will please him
Better than if Syrinx warbled,—
Bring them hither, Witch all-powerful.

Witch of Endor.

You have but to name your wishes,
And at once behold them granted,

As she waves her wand the PHANTOMS pass.

Ulysses (to GOETHE).

See fair Helen, like the bow of heaven
When its lovely head is rayed with sunshine.

See Briseïs breaking like bright morning
O'er the dewy hills when spring is flowering.

See the queenly stepping Bride of Carthage,
Like the world's great Pharos throned in grandeur.

Sappho, with a morn of bright carnations,
Breathing love and fire from her rich features.

And Poppæa, Nero's queen, like Venus
When in Vulcan's brazen net caught blushing.

And love-eyed Bianca di Capello,
All her world-entrancing charms revealing.

And Roxana, Alexander's empress ;
In her form the purple light of beauty.

See fair Rosamond, whose naked shoulders
Glitter like the starry beams of sunshine.

And Campaspè, laughing and entwining
Hyacinthine ropes to wreathe her dancing.

See the silver-footed Atalanta,
Maid as sweet and pure as pearly rose-dew.

See Hesionè, like lightning leaping
From a bowering sky of rose and lillie ;

And Andromeda, with mouth of roses,
Like a swan in limpid waters floating.

And the naked Phrynè, whose dark flowing
Ringlets wave upon the fragrant zephyrs.

And Erminia, whose celestial brightness
Far outshines the cheek of blushing summer.

And the iris-hearted Cleopatra,
Waving onward in a cloud of cupids.

Goethe.

Nay, but I see not any half so lovely
As thou, fair daughter of the Isle of Love.

Calypso.

Taste again this nectar goblet,
Sweeter than the mouth of Venus.

Mephistopheles.

What weak boobies are these mortals ;
When he folds her, how he fastens
His eyes on her ; fascination
Glides like poison through and through him,
Now she warbles, now she coyly

By receding woos him to her ;
 Now she whispers something to him,
 Touching with her lips of honey
 The small ear that drinks her accents ;
 Now she points to yonder arbour,
 Woven thick with smiling jasmine.
Well, beloved, thy lips are nectar.
 Now, *How many kisses, cousin,*
Are there—in a——little dozen ?
 Lulla, lulla, lullaby !
 Ah, that kiss—by Dis, he trembles !
 He is speechless with love's rapture.
 How she still enchains him, holds him !
 In her soft wild eyes flames beauty.
 I were caught myself. Armida,
 Hast thou no deceitful phantoms,
 Dressed in forms of light and splendour,
 By whose wily transformations
 We may win him ? By example
 Loftiest spirits have been tempted.

Armida.

Sleeping in the saffron sunlight
 Of the soft Italian evening,
 Yonder forest thick with pine trees,
 Wild and shadow, sad and silent,
 Stretches onward still and onward
 Through Ravenna's haunted precincts.
 Violet blue the arching heaven,
 And the stars begin to glimmer
 O'er that solitude love-breathing ;
 And the little shrill cicala

In the boughs are sweetly singing,
And the vesper chant is wafted
On the winds from Adria's waters ;
Who is he, alone and lonely
Musing underneath the pine wood,
Genius like a star illuming
The pale, proud, and scornful features,
Lit at times with merry flashes ?
On his marble brow sits sorrow,
In his beauteous eyes sleeps sadness ;
Quick and rapid alternations
Of deep thought, like fires volcanic
Blended with the virgin sunbeams
Mirrored are in each expression :
Now despair, now vengeance, anguish,
Mockery and gentlest feeling,
Love and sweetness pass and vanish. .
Long he gazes on the glory
Of that scene where Past and Present,
Dante, Dryden, and Boccaccio,
Their enchantments bring and mingle,
Till the heart and brain delighted
Swim in dizzy rapturous vision,
And the passion-haunted Minstrel
Of the Ocean isle stands weeping
In his heart-consuming exile,
O'er the wrecks of wayward follies,
Blighted splendours, mighty wishes,
Comes a fair and noble Ladye,
In whose soul he is a worship,
In her large dark eyes of passion
Gleams delight ; her auburn ringlets

Wave profusely down her shoulders,
 And her voice is spoken music :
 Let us listen—hearken, hearken
 To those accents soft and plaintive,
 Like the weeping bird's of legend ;
 While they ramble in endearment,
 Through the forest's witching mazes,
 And the sky grows dark and darker,
 And the stars shine bright and brighter,
 And the earth seems part of heaven.

Calypso.

Their bright dream of love is over ;
 He is wending to fair Hellas :
 Yet in many a bitter moment
 Will the memory of this passion
 Rise before him, springing ever
 In his soul like some fresh fountain ;
 What is being without love ?
 Lo ! again I hand thee, dearest,
 This bewitching nectar goblet,
 Sparkling like the eyes of Juno,
 Than her lips more sweetly luscious.
 If he drinks it can he 'scape us ? *Aside.*

Mephistopheles (aside).

This is rather too Platonic ;
 Let us have a warmer picture,
 From these false mask-wearing Phantoms.

Calypso.

See that palace rising grandly,
 Marble-columned, with its fountains

Shooting up in rainbow showerings.
Vines are clustered round the trellis,
Grapes as rich as Hebe's bosom,
Courting the delighted pressure ;
And the wingèd train of Pleasures
Dance amid its thornless roses.
Balmy-scented flowers are wafting
Hither their transporting fragrance ;
Nightingales with necks all golden
Warble in the branching foliage,
Odorous with voluptuous silence ;
Summer sheds its richest blooming
O'er its bowers, rocks, and waters ;
And a Spirit seems to haunt it,
At her love-thoughts sweetly blushing.
Evening gathers gently o'er it,
Stars light up their vestal cressets
In the purple domes of heaven ;
And the Moon walks forth in beauty,
Cloudless, tranced in virgin dreamings.
At yon lattice stands a Ladye,
While a Cavalier is stealing
Through the rich luxuriant myrtles
That grow underneath her window.
Plays the moonlight on the waters,
Glittering like sweet hope, when boyhood
In its verdure dreams sweet visions.
Who is that love-haunted Ladye ?
It is Estean Leonora.
Who the Cavalier so gently
Wooing her beneath that lattice ?
It is starry-thoughted Tasso.

Alcina.

See—beside the purple waters
Of yon sparkling lake a cottage,
Nestling in the citron blossoms ;
Birds are singing sweetly round it,
Flowers enwreathè it, as Cytherè
Wreathèd Adonis to her bosom,
Laughing in her gamesome radiance,
Like the eyes of some fair infant
Filled with sweet and gentle meanings.
Floral Enna yields in beauty
To this nook in dream-light mantled.
Who is that fair Woman standing
On the wrinkled sands of silver ?
Does she wait a coming lover ?
Hark the voice of passionèd music,
Mingled with the night wind's perfume.
And he comes—his eyes are beaming
Like black grapes when dew is on them ;
And her eyes are Cupid-lighted,
And her heart beats quickly, wildly,
For she hastens to embrace him ;
And he sings, ere yet he twines her
In his warm and wild caresses,
A sweet song of simple nature.
How she listens—gladness glistens
In her large love-darting eyelids,
Tremulous with passion's music ;
And her bosom white and billowy
Heaves, as heaves the snowy ocean
When the wooing wind compels it.
Listen to his mandoline.

Calypso.

Who is she? 'Tis Fiametta,
And the minstrel is Boccaccio;—
See they blend in love delighted.

Goethe.

Now I am thine ; for ever, ever thine,
O Love ! O Wonder ! O Immortal One !
Take me to thee, and make me all thine own,
Ever, for ever, ever, and for ever !

Calypso (*aside*).

I knew that he was mad, and Venus-blinded ;
Mephisto tells me, we must call The Sphynx
And get the fellow bound within her chains ;
When he is there secure, he thinks he'll swear
Aught that can be demanded to get out.
I know not if 'tis so, but must obey.

To GOETHE.

It is not granted me to love thee yet.
None can pass o'er the threshold of *my* bower,
Who has not solved the Riddle of The Sphynx.

Goethe.

Summon her hither !

Mephistopheles.

Faith it would be odd
If we two can't expound her dark conundrums.

Aside.

I never saw a soul so drunk before.

What would the metaphysicians say to this,
 Who think that souls can neither eat nor drink,
 But live, chameleon-like, on thinnest air ?

Sphinx.

Who calls me ?

Goethe.

I.

Mephistopheles.

And I : we want you, Madam !
 Give us a Riddle.

The Sphinx.

If ye solve it not,
 Know ye the penalty ?

Mephistopheles.

Of course we do :
 Go on, and quickly : but what brings the Furies
 Into this place ? they have not been invited.

A peal of thunder.

THE RIDDLE.

There was a smart Bastard of Folly and Lies,
 Who rode a pale horse through the stars in the skies,
 And traced on the Moon words that puzzled the wise.

There was a dark Woman who guided a Snake
 Across a wide Ocean of Waters, and spake ;
 Then sank in the heart of a bottomless Lake.

There was an old Dotard who sat on a throne,
Environed with Dragons about like a zone ;
A She-wolf came in and transformed him to stone.

A pause.

There was a Black Lion who lived in a Star,
That glittered ten millions of aïons afar,
Who sought a new planet in eagle-drawn car.

The lightning-winged Coursers that prance through the air,
Beheld his Avater with rage and despair,
And hurled the Black Lion and chariot—oh, where ;

Then rose a strong Angel and wept at his fall,
And he shouted ; the Steeds fell down dead at his call,
He descended to free the Black Lion from thrall.

A pause.

The brightest of Stars was transfused into Three,
And a Shower of red Wormwood fell into the sea,
Which disgorged from its crystalline caverns a Key.

The Three were transfused to a Sun, in whose light
Vanished darkness and madness, and sorrow and blight,
When a Tiger came down, and the Kosmos was night.

The Key sank again in the ocean so deep,
There was silence and wonder more awful than sleep,
The white-robed sat down by their sweet harps to weep.

A pause.

A blast of red thunder, a shock of red flame,
Twelve Stars fell from heaven ; the Tiger grew tame,
The riders came forth with the might of The Name.

The scorpions were there, with the she-wolves and beasts
From the souths, from the norths, from the wests, from
the easts,

With wavings of banners and chauntings of priests.

But they perished—the Stars and the Sun shown once
more,

And the Planets knelt down at the feet of the Four,
The whole Universe circling around to adore.

• MEPHISTOPHELES *falls senseless*. The FURIES bear off GOETHE.

END OF ACT SECOND.

